

Report for: ACTION
Item Number:



Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO – Part I
Title	Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Stage 2 Consultation/Airport Commission Interim Report
Responsible Officer(s)	Craig Miller / Chris Nash
Contact officer, job title and phone number	Chris Nash, Team Leader – Environmental Protection 01628 683645
Member reporting	Cllr Carwyn Cox
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	30 January 2014
Implementation Date if Not Called In	‘Immediately’
Affected Wards	All, but particularly the communities within Bray, Castle Without, Park, Clewer East, Clewer North, Clewer South, Old Windsor, Datchet, Eton and Castle, Horton and Wraysbury
Keywords/Index	Night flying restrictions; Heathrow Airport; noise quota counts, community noise; annoyance; community engagement

Report Summary

1. This report contains two elements:
 - a. A summary of the key elements of the Stage 2 consultation document issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) entitled; ‘*Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage2 Consultation*’ (Issued November 2013); and
 - b. The Executive Summary of the Airports Commission Interim Report issued on 17 December 2013.
2. Regarding the Night Flying Restrictions Stage 2 Consultation, Cabinet is being asked to consider both the recommendations of the consultation, together with responses to the additional questions being posed by DfT.
3. With respect to the Airport Commission’s Interim Report it is being suggested that at this stage Cabinet merely notes the Executive Summary and associated recommendations whilst a further more detailed report is prepared for a future cabinet meeting (April 2014) following further detailed considerations of the likely impact upon local residents; the views of other

stakeholders; and any community reaction to the matters contained within the Interim Report.

4. The deadline for response to the second stage consultation on Night Flying Restrictions is **31 January 2014**.
5. Essentially the report recommends that the Council maintains its historical position of recognising the economic benefit of Heathrow airport and its support for a sustainable aviation industry and future airport development, but raises strong objections to night flights as a first principle and seeking to press for improved noise mitigation controls and insulation schemes that benefit those local residents who are adversely affected by Heathrow operations during the day and/or at night.
6. There are no identified additional financial implications for the Council at the present time. Any developments that might lead to any future financial implications would be the subject of a separate report.

If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit?

Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit	Dates by which residents can expect to notice a difference
<p>1. Responding to Department for Transport will ensure the Borough's views are made known to Government so they may be included in the formulation of future aviation policy.</p>	<p>This will depend ultimately on the Airport Commission's recommendations to government and the timetable for taking forward measures that optimise existing runway capacity at the three strategic airports. A new night flying restrictions regime is not expected to be introduced before 2017.</p>
<p>2. Comments, particularly those from local residents are more likely to contribute to a greater understanding and opinion of local issues arising from the consultation.</p>	<p>Through raising existing issues, whilst there is no guarantee of success, it is more likely to result in earlier intervention and mitigation of more local concerns in the short term that will be of benefit to local residents.</p>

1. Details of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet;

- 1) Note the contents contained within this report relating to:
 - i. the 'Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage 2 Consultation' issued by the DfT in November 2013; and
 - ii. Executive Summary of the Airports Commission Interim Report issued on 17 December 2013.
- 2) Authorises the Interim Head of Public Protection, in consultation with the Lead Member for Environmental Services and the Chairman of the Aviation Forum to submit a response on behalf of the Council based on the details set out in Appendix 1 that maintains the Borough's ambition for the progressive reduction and subsequent cessation of night flights at Heathrow;
- 3) Authorise and delegate responsibility to the Interim Head of Public Protection to implement an effective public awareness campaign on the wider aspects of the national aviation debate thereby encouraging local engagement in the issues that are of concern; and
- 4) Authorises the Lead Member for Environmental Services in conjunction with the Chairman of the Aviation Forum issue a series of press releases at the appropriate times.

2. Reason for Recommendation(s) and Options Considered

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Members will recall the previous report entitled: *Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage 1 Consultation* that was presented to the April 2013 Cabinet meeting. That report set out the historical summary of the various night flight restriction regimes; a treatise of the Council's policy position with respect to night flights; and the Summary and Structure of the previous Phase 1 Consultation.

2.1.2 Many of the key concerns for Borough residents were also outlined, including the following:

- Strength of local feeling and historical background to the Council's position on night flights.
- Relevant timetables for the associated strands of the Aviation Policy Framework (APF) process e.g. publication deadlines; Davies Airports Commission; Operational Freedoms Trials; abandonment of the Cranford Agreement (and easterly alternation).
- WHO standards and acceptability criteria in the absence of credible research in the UK on community noise thresholds.
- Mitigation packages for day- and night time.
- The current strength of the economic debate.

These same high level concerns remain.

2.2 Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage 2 Consultation

2.2.1 Under the Civil Aviation Act the Secretary of State currently has powers to set noise levels at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports, collectively termed the three 'designated' airports. These are the only airports where the Government takes responsibility for setting the night flight regime.

- 2.2.2 This latest consultation is, in fact, the second of two phases. Phase-1 focused on a 'call for evidence' and considered responses for the purposes of determining a new night flying regime. The responses were also considered as part of the Airports Commission (AC) that is considering the wider UK Aviation Policy Framework. The AC's Interim Report was published on 17 December 2013 and this report cross references with the recommendations contained in that Report.
- 2.2.3 The phase-two consultation related to specific proposals, such as:
- Relevant developments since the first stage consultation;
 - Summary of First stage consultation responses;
 - Proposals for next regime
 - Range of specific matters, including noise; land use planning; operational procedures; night time easterly preference; economic incentives; other operational restrictions; noise monitoring; and a further list of questions. The questions are listed in **Appendix 1** together with suggested responses.
- 2.2.4 In considering the views of the various interest groups, the DfT has adhered to what is termed the '*balanced approach to noise management*'. This underpins the approach to be adopted and essentially consists of identifying the noise problem at an airport and assessing the cost-effectiveness of the various measures available to reduce the noise.

Summary of key issues

- 2.3 Many of the various respondents to the first stage consultation suggested there should be no changes made to the current night flying regime prior to completion of the AC's work. The DfT has agreed with this such that all the key features of the current scheme will remain virtually unchanged until 2017, such that the proposals will amount to a 3 year rather than the usual 5 year regime.
- 2.4 No major changes are proposed to the number of flights (take offs & landings); remaining around 16 per night at Heathrow between 2330-0600h during the summer season; and 18 during the winter period, totalling some 2550 and 3250 respectively. This accounts for approximately 96% usage of the movement limits.
- 2.5 In terms of 'Noise Quota Limits' (the total amount of noise emitted by specific aircraft types expressed as noise quota points) the DfT has determined there should be no reduction in the quota. Records indicate there has been a gradual decline in the percentage of noise quota used since winter 2011/12, such that the latest indicate that only 76.8 % was used, allowing further growth within the capped level of movements. The DfT believe this reduction has been due to the introduction of quieter fleets over the period.
- 2.6 One slight concession has been the extension of the operational ban on the noisiest category of aircraft (QC/8 and QC/16) taking off after 2300h (it was previously 2330h). In practice however these aircraft do not operate at Heathrow. Conversely, despite calls for introducing the phased removal via operational bans on QC/4 aircraft, the DfT are proposing no changes to the rules relating to QC/4 aircraft. These are mostly B747/400 aircraft being

operated by British Airways and remain an ongoing concern to Borough residents.

- 2.7 The Stage 2 consultation refers to a number of opportunities to conduct trials at Heathrow prior to the next scheme in 2017. These relate to:
- Early morning respite trials
 - Increased angle of descent greater than 3.25 degrees
 - Night-time easterly preference at Heathrow (with aircraft landing over the Borough).
 - Displaced landing threshold (aircraft landing further along the runway)
 - Economic incentives- noise insulation schemes, with an added expectation that airports continue to voluntarily offer compensation schemes and do not propose to intervene and exercise regulatory powers in this area.
 - Economic incentives – landing charges, departure limits and fines, noting Heathrow have been committed to developing these principles.
- 2.8 Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the Stage 2 consultation is the continuing perceived reticence to recognise the fact that the current methodology of assessing the impact of aircraft noise on a community, including potential health impacts, remains un-calibrated and out dated. Yet, it is perhaps the most important underpinning principle for all aviation noise-related assessments, feeding into the economic and environmental considerations. The *'balanced approach to noise management'* relies on robust modelling. Clearly, this is not the case and needs to be more formally challenged given the wider consequences for future aviation option appraisals.
- 2.9 The document sets out a number of proposed Environmental Objectives for the next regime. Whilst these objectives finally recognise World Health Organisation (WHO) standards with respect to the health impacts of noise at night, expressed as aspirational targets, the individual objectives are some what lacking in terms of being Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, or Time bound. (S.M.A.R.T.). This issue is included in the Borough's suggested response.
- 2.10 In conclusion, the DfT has stated that in proposing the next night flying restrictions regime they have carefully considered the responses received from the first stage consultation. The proposals, in their view reflect:
- Recent policy statements, notably the Aviation Policy Framework and the Noise Statement Policy for England.
 - The ongoing work of the Airports Commission, its relevance to the three designated airports and a desire to create regulatory stability during the next period up to 2017.
 - The likely worsening of the noise climate if the existing restrictions are not maintained in the short term at Heathrow and in the longer term at the other airports as demand for slots increases (see draft impact assessment).
 - The contribution of the aviation industry to the UK's economic recovery.
 - The improving noise climate due to the use of quieter aircraft.

- Industry's willingness to trial new operational procedures to reduce noise and airports' review of economic measures such as noise insulation schemes and departure noise fines.

- 2.11 It should be noted that it is the opinion of the Borough that these DfT conclusions do not adequately address the current impact and disruption suffered by RBWM residents. Our position has and will continue to oppose night flights, with a focus on reducing / limiting the number of people affected by this source of aviation noise.
- 2.12 It is a key concern that should recommendations be heavily slanted towards UK economic growth, at the expense of environmental and societal priorities, then once decisions have been made and the future strategy established, there remains little chance of any change of direction with the next regime, when ever that might be.
- 2.13 The Airports Commission has stated it will be taking into account emerging evidence of the effects of night noise on health and sleep disturbance. The Government has stated it will also take into account this evidence in its response to the Airports Commission.
- 2.12 In line with the ICAO balanced approach, DfT believes that 'continuing the current restrictions is justified in order to maintain the protections which local communities have come to expect and to deliver its overall policy of limiting and where possible reducing the number of people significantly affected by aircraft noise'.
- 2.13 **Appendix 1** sets out the suggested Borough response to the questions contained within the Stage 2 consultation document.

Airports Commission Interim Report

- 2.14 Cabinet specifically requested that this report should also provide an early summary of the Airports Commission Interim Report on the basis that the Night Flying Restrictions Stage 1 and 2 Consultation were linked with the short –term capacity issues being considered by the Commission.
- 2.15 The Interim Report was published on 17 December 2013. It is an extensive document running to some 415 pages and needs significant evaluation. The approach being taken therefore is to set out in **Appendix 2** the Executive Summary of the Interim Report to provide an overview of the matters under consideration and likely to be brought forward in 2015.
- 2.16 In the meantime, the contents of this comprehensive report will be evaluated and it is being suggested it is brought back for detailed Cabinet consideration at the April 2014 meeting. A Borough Press Release setting out the Borough's initial reaction to the proposals was issued on 18th December 2013 following attendance by the Chairman and Vice chairman of the Aviation Forum to the launch of the report. A copy of that press release is set out in **Appendix 3**.

Option	Comments
Option 1: Do nothing – NOT RECOMMENDED	Historically the Council has taken on the mantle of community leadership by supporting robustly the views of local communities and lobbying for effective mitigation measures against the adverse impacts arising from Heathrow operations, particularly on the night flight issue. Not to do so would be inconsistent with current Council policy.
Option 2: Minimalist approach of merely answering the questions posed in the consultation document together with any other technical matters of concern to the council. – NOT RECOMMENDED	Lost opportunity to integrate the issue of night flying restrictions with the wider discussion on the UK Aviation Policy Framework.
Option 3: Responding to the consultation document and adopting a more proactive approach by raising public awareness and support on the issue through effective public information facilitated by the local press and media; conducting a series of presentations to local Parishes and interest groups; running articles in Borough publications. - RECOMMENDED	Most local authorities around Heathrow are committed to a phased reduction, leading to the abolition, of night flights at Heathrow Airport. Aviation is a key concern for many local residents living under the flight paths. Urging local residents to voice their opinions; and encouraging the public to respond to the various consultations and participate in initiatives such as the <i>WideNoise</i> project and to report their concerns over the adverse impact of aircraft noise over the area, including night flights is likely to be more influential in formulating a more equitably balanced aviation policy.

3. Key Implications

What does success look like, how is it measured, what are the stretch targets

Defined Outcomes	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date they should be delivered by
Local residents' views and concerns are raised and included as part of the borough's response to the Night Flying Restrictions Stage 2 consultation.	Consultation response not submitted.	Consultation response submitted in line within appropriate timescales incorporating the views of the Borough and local residents to the new night flying regime for Heathrow Airport.	Commitment from UK Govt. to address key issues of concern relating to night flying operations at Heathrow Airport; including - a package of tangible and enhanced noise protection measures; - the early abolition of the Cranford	<u>All</u> key local concerns are addressed specifically within the new night restrictions regime and Aviation Policy Framework, as set out in the Borough's responses, together with SMART objectives for resolution.	October 2014 for the revised night flying restrictions regime. The DfT timescales are variable and currently undefined for the longer-term Aviation Policy Framework.

			Agreement; - introduction of easterly alternation.		
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4. Financial Details

4.1 There are no anticipated financial implications or negative impacts upon the budget arising out of this report; and any incidental expenditure e.g. raising public awareness, is capable of being absorbed into existing resources.

5. Legal Implications

None

6. Value for Money

6.1 There are a number of issues upon which the borough agrees with other local authorities around Heathrow Airport. Collaborative working between local authorities; the sharing of available data; evaluation of the proposals contained within the consultation document and ensuring consistency when proposing objectives and targets demonstrates best practice and offers significant value for money.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

7.1 The issue of night flights raises a number of fundamental sustainability issues particularly those relating to improving the quality of life and seeking to strike the correct balance between the societal interests of various community groups located around Heathrow Airport and the economic and environmental issues. Measures to encourage community empowerment and participation in the aviation debate are primary tenets of sustainability.

8. Risk Management

8.1 None

9. Links to Strategic Objectives

9.1 Responding to the consultation is aligned with the following strategic objectives:

Residents First

- Encourage Healthy People and Lifestyles
- Improve the Environment, Economy and Transport
- Work for safer and stronger communities

Value for Money

- Deliver Economic Services
- Improve the use of technology

Delivering Together

- Enhanced Customer Services
- Deliver Effective Services
- Strengthen Partnerships

10. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

10.1 A first stage EQIA has been conducted. This initial screening confirmed the initiative positively contributes and complements Equality, Human Rights and Community Cohesion considerations. A second stage assessment is not considered necessary.

11. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

11.1 None

12. Property and Assets

12.1 None

13. Any other implications:

13.1 None

14. Consultation

14.1 This matter has been discussed at the Aviation Forum meeting held on 12 November 2013, following which a specially convened Technical sub-group of the Aviation Forum meeting was held on 11th December 2013 to engage stakeholders and seek a consensus on the thrust of the responses to be included in the Borough's detailed response. A number of constructive and valid comments were received and are included as part of the Borough's suggested response.

14.2 In addition, a number of inter-authority meetings and discussions have been taking place. A meeting of LAANC discussed the matter on 6th December 2013.

14.3 A public meeting was held at Wraysbury Village Hall on 11th November and at Windsor Girls School on 22nd November 2013, where a combined figure of around 500 residents were addressed by the local Member of Parliament for Windsor (22nd Nov) and Heathrow Airport and Borough officials on the various actions being taken by various interest groups and stakeholders on key aviation matters, including night flights.

14.4 The Borough's collaborative initiative with UCL, '*WideNoise*' is currently being implemented as previously reported. To date there has been an excellent response from community participants.

14.5 This matter is to be considered by the Highways, Transport and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on Wednesday 15 January 2014. Any comments will be included in this report and reported to cabinet.

15. Timetable for Implementation

15.1 The deadline for responses to the DfT is the 31st January 2014. It is suggested a holding response is sent to the DfT prior to this date in early January 2014.

16. Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Night Flying Restrictions Consultation - Summary of Questions and Draft Responses.
- **Appendix 2:** Executive Summary of the Airport Commissions Interim Report and Recommendations to Government dated 17th December 2013
- **Appendix 3:** Borough Press Release setting out the Borough's initial reaction to the Airports Commission Interim Report and proposals, issued on 18th December 2013

17. Background Information

- Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage 1 Consultation
- Aviation Policy Framework (March 2013)
- Report to Cabinet: Draft Aviation Policy Framework 25th.October 2012

- Report to Cabinet : '*WideNoise*' February 2013
- Previous Reports to cabinet re Night Flying Restrictions 1993; 1998; 2005
- Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage 1 of consultation on Restrictions to apply from 30 October 2005
- Previous Council/Cabinet Reports on Aircraft Noise and Aviation Policy
- Evidence submitted to the Heathrow Terminal 5 Public Inquiry

**APPENDIX 1: Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted: Stage 2 Consultation
SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS**

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
<p>Q1. Do you agree with our preliminary view as to the new studies on health effects?</p>	<p>We do <u>not</u> agree with the DfT's preliminary view. Neither do we understand why the DfT is choosing to disregard the issue until 2017, a crucial time for key decisions relating to the future development of UK Aviation strategy. RBWM has consistently called upon DfT to give proportional consideration to the impact of aircraft noise on public health and the use of WHO community noise standards as a baseline standard for setting criteria; conducting robust cost-benefit analyses; setting SMART environment objectives; and establishing a consistent approach. The current scheme is flawed and the 2007 ANASE study (Attitudes to Noise from Aviation Sources in England) needs to be re-visited or re-conducted. There are sufficient international studies that demonstrate the UK methodology is significantly outdated and un-calibrated.</p>	<p>The assessment of the impact of aviation noise upon local communities is dependent upon having a robust method that is accurately calibrated to community response. The current system is flawed. Recent international studies in the UK; EU and USA, cited in the consultation, all conclude there is evidence to support there are public health implications from aircraft noise. The evidence corresponds to the highly respected WHO conclusions upon which are based recommended levels to be attained. Despite this evidence para 2.27 states: '<i>we (DfT) do not consider that there is a need to change the balance which we currently propose to strike between the costs and benefits of the current night flying restrictions</i>'. A review is proposed for next year on how best to reflect health effects from aviation noise in appraisal guidance. This is significant to the Davies Airports Commission deliberations on the future of UK aviation policy as it will have concluded its recommendations without the benefit of such a review and therefore decisions will be more slanted to an understated 'balanced approach' in favour of economic considerations. The basis of such important decisions</p>

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
		for the UK economy could be at the expense of the nation's public health considerations. Public health is based on 'the precautionary principle'. - this appears to being ignored in respect of the aviation interests.
Q2. Do you have any further views on the costs and benefits, including health impacts, which we should take into account in our decision?	This question relates solely to defining the economic benefits of night flights. The reference to health impacts in practice is being over-shadowed by the perceived economic priority. There remains much discord and disagreement between the various economic studies that has been undertaken in recent months – surprisingly, with contradictory results.	Implicit in response to Q1 is the issue of over-estimating the economic value of night flights given the health impacts are under-evaluated. Any consistent application of UK criteria with WHO standards is likely to incur a significant cost element. Is this the reason for the perceived reticence to adopt the new evidence?
Q3. Do you agree with the proposed environmental objectives?	<p>In principle, but <u>not</u> in the format or scope as is being proposed. The environmental objectives are not SMART and fall well short of instilling continuous improvement in the current night noise climate.</p> <p>Environmental objectives as defined by regulation are <i>'objectives set by a competent authority in support of one or more of the following objectives:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The promotion of the development of airport capacity in harmony with the environment;</i> • <i>Facilitating any specific noise abatement objectives at the airport;</i> • <i>Achieving maximum environment benefit in the most cost effective manner;</i> • <i>Limiting or reducing the number of people significantly affected by</i> 	<p>The proposed objectives are not SMART.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woolly and ambiguous statements such as 'limiting' (rather than 'reducing'), 'encouraging', 'pending decisions' have been introduced; • Several have no specific targets or achievement timescales defined; • Performance indicators are poorly expressed; imprecise or do not directly relate to the objective and/or are not in control of the airport. • Indices are not specified and remain ambiguous. • No allowance has been made

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
	<i>aircraft noise.'</i>	<p>for the flawed assessment criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little evidence of 'stretch' or seeking to address current community concerns with any intent or immediacy. <p>There appears to be no corresponding 'Economic indicators' to counter balance the environmental proposals.</p>
Q4. Do you agree that the next regime should last until October 2017?	<p>RBWM agrees with the sentiment that there is little point in introducing a new scheme in advance of the Airports Commission's (AC) recommendations – subject to the caveat that a proper assessment is conducted (see Q1 response above). However, RBWM is concerned that if the focus of the AC's recommendations is heavily slanted towards UK economic growth at the expense of environmental and societal priorities then once decisions have been made and the future strategy established, there remains little chance of any change of direction with the next regime, when ever that might be.</p>	<p>Public mistrust based on 'broken promises' and the relative political timings related to the development of the UK Aviation Policy Framework and the directed Airports Commission operating framework.</p>
Q5. Do you have any views on the revised dispensations guidance?	<p>RBWM dispensations are acceptable for genuine 'emergency' or where there are over-riding issues of 'national security or interest'. In such cases where flights are necessary there should be a presumption based on the tests of 'necessity' and the use of the quietest aircraft for the avoidance of abuse.</p> <p>RBWM notes the consultation proposals for including dispensations for early morning trials at Heathrow pre-dates the Airports</p>	<p>'Thousands' of residents living around the three strategic airports are affected by night flights. Such occasions should be avoided where ever possible.</p>

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
	<p>Commissions recommendations of 17/12/13. RBWM questions the 'necessity' of permitting dispensations for such purposes.</p> <p>Greater transparency through regular reporting and demonstrating pro-active surveillance would find favour with those residents frequently impacted by such activities.</p>	
<p>Q6. Do you agree that we should maintain the existing movement and noise quota limits until October 2017? If not, please set out your preferred options and reasons – this could include the noise and economic impact of any alternatives</p>	<p>This is a contentious issue. RBWM believes there should be a commitment for a progressive reduction of night flying. Current evidence suggests existing noise quotas are significantly under-used, particularly at all 3 strategic airports for winter 20 12/13 + summer 2013.</p> <p>Para 4.31 states: <i>'Maintaining the existing noise quotas would ensure that the total noise which can be emitted in 2017 is no higher than what could have been emitted in 2011/12'</i>.</p> <p>This statement conveniently over-looks the fact that 2011/12 was unacceptable in the first instance to many thousands of local residents affected by night flying operations and therefore fails to commit to encouraging any further 'reduction' in noise at night through the introduction of less noisy aircraft fleets. In the event the trend of modernising fleets continues as expected, this will bring more pressure to bear on increasing the number of night movements given the mechanics of the scheme. The current intention to optimise existing runway capacity</p>	<p>RBWM's historic policy on night flights has been to press for a progressive reduction in night flying. The latest proposals effectively 'freezes' the existing arrangements despite clear opportunities to improve the situation at night.</p> <p>The existing regime is built on two parameters: the Night Movement limits; and the Noise Quota, working in tandem. There is room within each to reduce the impact at night. By retaining both at existing levels, despite reducing trends, will provide the necessary flexibility to increase night movements in the interests of optimising existing capacity prior to the provision of additional runway capacity in the South East. It is a deliberate growth strategy, perhaps using the revised dispensations and trials to overcome current movement limits and thereby stay within the legal framework, akin to an alternative <i>'predict and provide'</i></p>

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
	<p>and talk of early morning trials to increases movements adds further weight to these concerns.</p> <p>RBWM also notes there is little corresponding mention in the Second Stage consultation of usage trend data for <u>movement levels</u> and the effective dismissal of any intention to alter the existing limits pending decisions on future airport capacity. It could be argued a reliance on the Carry Over flexibility falls short of Environmental Objective 1 – <i>‘Limit and where possible reduce the number of people significantly affected by aircraft noise at night’</i></p>	<p>option for Heathrow!</p>
<p>Q7. Do you have any comments on our forecasts to October 2017?</p>	<p>It supports RBWM's concerns regarding what appears to be a deliberate intention to encourage /facilitate growth in night flying over the short –term period - as expressed in Q6.</p>	<p>Evidence presented and implied intention.</p>
<p>Q8. Do you have any views on how the benefits of quieter aircraft can be shared in future between communities living close to the airport and the aviation industry?</p>	<p>As previously stated, the existing night flying restrictions regime and the associated evaluation methodologies fails to address the totality of the unacceptability of the current situation; and as a consequence the measures to mitigate this impact remain woefully inadequate.</p> <p>This question appears to suggest that the aviation industry should derive some benefit from improving an unacceptable situation – presumably by allowing increased night movements – This would be fundamentally perverse i.e. the polluter is rewarded! This is inconsistent with many of the UK's underpinning environmental principles.</p>	

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
<p>Q9 (a). Do you agree with extending the operational ban of QC/8 and QC/16 aircraft to the entire night period (2300-0700h)?</p>	<p>Yes. Given there are few flying at Heathrow, this represents a token gesture and will not bring about any noticeable improvement for local residents.</p> <p>RBWM urges the DfT to also re-consider their stance and commence include a requirement for a progressive reduction of QC/4 aircraft at night over the next regime, given <i>‘there have been no QC/4 aircraft scheduled to fly at night for a number of years, and a voluntary ban on all new scheduled services to include QC/4 and above. This would be an additional useful Environmental Objective, with SMART targets and send a strong message to the industry of the continuing expectation for them to deliver on their obligations to reduce the noise impact arising from their business operations.</i></p>	<p>RBWM has already raised this in the response to the First Stage consultation. The Impact Assessment confirms this to be the case for Heathrow Airport (Page 17). This would incentivise BA (in particular) to replace its aging fleet of QC/4 (B747/400).</p>
<p>Q9 (b). Do you agree with our assessment of the costs and benefits in the draft IA?</p>	<p>Not entirely. See comments to the IA questionnaire below.</p> <p>The ‘no night flight’ option should have been assessed.</p>	
<p>Q10. Are there any other changes to the regime which we should consider?</p>	<p>RBWM suggests the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infringement levels and fines for arrival aircraft • Revision of the environmental objectives in line with WHO guidelines • Delete the re-defined Disregarded flights to <u>exclude</u> Trials as a justification. It is not a necessity. 	

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
<p>Q11. Do you have any further comments on the scope for trialling new operational procedures which have potential noise reduction benefits in the period up to 2017?</p>	<p>Not in respect of night flying restrictions. The recent Operational Freedoms Trials conducted at Heathrow were inconclusive. Yet there is pressure to introduce measures that seek to support the economic imperative, despite the fact that they caused wide spread consternation to local residents who suffered significantly in certain communities. The danger is a repeat of this behavioural folly.</p>	<p>The recent Operational Freedoms Trials caused significant disruption to Borough residents e.g. Old Windsor and Wraysbury. It was this adverse impact that led to the introduction of the Borough's <i>WideNoise</i> project.</p>
<p>Q12. Are there any other matters you think this consultation should cover?</p>	<p>RBWM would have expected to see a greatly enhanced noise insulation package for local communities based on a redefined noise contour using EU standards of measurement and WHO guidelines.</p> <p>RBWM would like to see indexation applied to all fines and monetary incentives and disincentives. This needs to include a retrospective application of indexation from the original date of introduction so as to achieve a real and meaningful value. Fines must not be set at a level that simply renders them to be no more than a minor occupational hazard. All income generated from fines or disincentives should be hypothecated to a community fund.</p>	<p>Consistent with RBWM historical stance.</p>
<p>Q13 (a). Do you agree with the locations of the proposed new monitors at Heathrow? If not, are there alternative locations you would favour and why?</p>	<p>RBWM is concerned there is little consideration being given to installing monitors to the west of the airport given some of the proposals currently under consideration. Installation prior to any</p>	<p>Easterly preference; abandonment of Cranford Agreement and general lack of RBWM capability to monitor aircraft noise suggests RBWM should press for some permanent monitors within the</p>

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
	operational changes would enable the effectiveness of any changes to be objectively evaluated.	RBWM boundaries.
Q13 (b). Do you agree with the proposal to apply runway-specific limit adjustments for easterly departures at Heathrow? If not, please give reasons.	No comments offered	
IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS		
Q1. Do you agree with our assessment of how movements and quota usage are likely to change over the period to the end of the summer season 2017 at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted?	RBWM is concerned that the shortfall (Heathrow) depicted in the graphs will be made up by the revisions to the definition of disregarded flights and ensuing trials proposed for Heathrow.	
Q2. Do you agree with our assessment of the costs and benefits of option 1 at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted? Would you expect there to be any additional costs and benefits?	RBWM is concerned as to the accuracy of the impact assessments given the flawed baseline evaluation that must have been undertaken as a result of continued use of an un-calibrated noise assessment procedure. It would appear that if the noise impact is under-stated then the cost of the noise impact from sleep deprivation and the potential adverse health impacts; inadequate noise mitigation /noise insulation schemes must also be understated. This would reduce the benefit of operating aircraft at night and reduce the economic benefits of doing so.	This is potentially the most significant flaw with regard to the robustness of the Impact Assessment conducted by the DfT.
Q3. Do you agree with our assessment of the costs and benefits of option 2 at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted? Would you expect there to be any additional costs and benefits?	RBWM is concerned as to the accuracy of the impact assessments given the flawed baseline evaluation that must have been undertaken as a result of continued use of an un-calibrated noise assessment procedure. It	

CONSULTATION QUESTION	PROPOSED RESPONSE	RATIONALE FOR COMMENTS
	<p>would appear that if the noise impact is under-stated then the cost of the noise impact from sleep deprivation and the potential adverse health impacts; inadequate noise mitigation /noise insulation schemes must also be understated. This would reduce the benefit of operating aircraft at night and reduce the economic benefits of doing so.</p>	
RBWM'S OUTSTANDING AREAS OF CONCERN NOT ADDRESSED BY DfT IN STAGE 2 CONSULTATION		
<p>1. RBWM submitted a comprehensive response to the Stage 1 consultation and APF stages. It has also submitted comprehensive comments to the Airports Commission at various stages leading up to the Interim report published on 17/12/13.</p>	<p>RBWM is disappointed in the apparent dismissal of many suggestions put to the DfT on behalf of residents residing to the west of Heathrow Airport who are significantly and adversely affected by aviation noise. The DfT appears to have 'sat on the fence' pending the deliberations of the Airports Commission. Given the DfT has set the policy framework for the AC in the first instance it appears somewhat strange that DfT is avoiding grasping some of the fundamental areas of concern for a further 3 years when there is little justification to do so. There are statements in the Second Stage document that inevitably raise suspicions about the degree of transparency and inter-dependency (rather than 'independence') of the current reviews.</p>	
<p>2. In preparing its various responses the Borough has been particularly careful to ensure its responses are both consistent and reflect the long suffering, local situation, whilst seeking to strike an equitable balance between the various interests.</p>	<p>The lack of any real tangible outcomes to the current night flying restrictions consultation exercises serves to demonstrate that the 'balanced approach' that is often cited clearly still favours the aviation industry rather than local residents' interests / quality of life / public health issues.</p> <p>The DfT is respectfully urged to re-visit previous RBWM's responses to the various consultations documents prior to formulating the next Night Flying Restrictions regime 2014-2017.</p>	

APPENDIX 2. Airports Commission: Interim Report (published 17/12/13)

Executive Summary

- 1 Decisions on airport location and capacity are among the most important strategic choices a country or city can make, influencing the economic, environmental and social development of cities and regions more than almost any other single planning decision. They are also among the most contentious.
- 2 Alongside economic benefits, airports bring noise, air pollution and carbon emissions, all of which can have significant impacts on the environment and on the quality of life for people who live or work nearby. The planning process must therefore ensure that decisions on airport capacity balance local considerations with the national interest.
- 3 In addition, most major UK airports are – unusually in international terms – in private ownership. This means that airport planning must also take proper account of commercial considerations. Airports will not choose to finance and build additional capacity unless they are confident it will be heavily utilised.
- 4 The question of UK airport capacity has been considered a number of times over past decades. The Roskill Commission in 1968 recommended a new airport at Cublington, with a minority report favouring Maplin Sands. Neither airport was built. More recently, the 2003 White Paper *The Future of Air Transport* concluded that a second runway should be built at Stansted, followed by a third at Heathrow, if certain environmental standards could be met. That conclusion was rejected by the incoming coalition Government after the 2010 General Election.
- 5 The Airports Commission (the Commission) was set up in 2012 to take a fresh and independent look at the UK's future airport capacity needs. It has been tasked with producing: An *Interim Report* (this document) by the end of 2013, setting out the nature, scale, and timing of steps needed to maintain the UK's status as an international hub for aviation, alongside recommendations for making better use of the UK's existing runway capacity over the next five years; and, A final report by summer 2015, setting out recommendations on how to meet any need for additional airport capacity in the longer-term.
- 6 To facilitate the process of reaching final recommendations, and reduce uncertainty, it has also sought to identify a list of the most credible options for new runway capacity, which will be further developed and appraised before the final report.
- 7 The Commission has aimed to generate a greater consensus on airport policy by following an approach that is:
Integrated: The Commission has considered a range of economic, social and environmental factors that affect how much – and what sort of – airport capacity is needed in the UK. It has not followed a mechanistic 'predict and provide' model, based on forecasting future demand for aviation and then meeting that demand no matter the cost. It has commissioned new research and analysis and sought to consider impacts across the whole of the system, including on air traffic and air space, surface access to airports, cost and deliverability.
Collaborative: The Commission has engaged extensively with a broad range of interested parties, through public evidence sessions, a programme of meetings and visits, and a series of discussion papers on key topics. As the number of responses to the discussion papers indicates, the papers were important for advancing debate on key topics such as connectivity, climate change, aviation noise, and airport operational models. The Commission also invited submissions on how to make best use of existing

runway capacity, and proposals for adding new airport capacity in the longer-term. It also appointed a panel of leading experts to advise it on key issues.

The world has changed since previous reviews of UK airport capacity

- 8 While the UK has debated airport policy the world has changed. Globalisation and technological innovation are driving an increase in cross-border flows of goods, services and people. The global economy's centre of gravity is shifting from west to east. Lifestyles have also changed, with many people taking advantage of European integration to live and work outside their country of origin.
- 9 Aviation has had to adapt to these changes. Two parallel trends can be seen:
 - **Consolidation and network integration focused on major aviation hubs.** In the most liberalised markets such as the United States and, increasingly, Europe, significant market share has been captured by very large carriers, often formed through mergers. Three major global 'alliances' between airlines have emerged – Star Alliance, SkyTeam, and oneworld. These alliances have developed global route networks focused on major aviation hubs in the United States, Europe and, more recently, the Middle East and Asia.
 - **The emergence of new competitors and new business models, especially in the low-cost and point-to-point markets.** The position of the major American and European carriers is being challenged by rapidly growing Middle Eastern and Asian airlines and by competition from low-cost carriers. The low-cost sector has grown rapidly since the early 1990s, and is continuing to expand into new markets such as business travel and long-haul services.
- 10 These trends are not mutually exclusive. For example, some low-cost airlines are entering alliances and some network airlines have set up low-cost subsidiaries. New aircraft, such as the Airbus 350 and Boeing 787, could further blur the boundaries as they make new types of routes and services viable. The Middle Eastern carriers are establishing significant new hubs in the Gulf.
- 11 As well as adapting to these new commercial realities, the industry also has to address its environmental impacts. International negotiations on a framework to control aviation greenhouse gas emissions are ongoing, but significant challenges remain and the ultimate form of such a scheme remains unclear.
- 12 In this context, the future of the industry remains difficult to predict. Some argue that airline alliances, and the hub-and-spoke networks that they operate, will remain central to the way the industry works. Others maintain that a wider range of airports will start to operate some form of hub, even where they lack a major network carrier, by enabling passengers to 'self-connect' or by hosting new partnerships between low-cost carriers and other airlines. A third view is that new aircraft with longer ranges will make more long-haul destinations viable as point-to-point routes, resulting in a decline in the importance of hubs.
- 13 The balance between the integrated network model based around major hubs, and the growth of low-cost and other point-to-point models, may have profound effects on the future shape of the overall aviation industry, as well as affecting the nature and scale of any additional capacity which might be required in the UK.

So far, UK airports have adapted fairly well

- 14 These changes have had important impacts on the UK aviation sector. The consolidation around major hubs has entrenched the dominance of the London aviation market and particularly the UK's largest airport, Heathrow, which acts as a hub for British Airways, the country's sole network carrier. Meanwhile, a variety of carriers operate successful and dynamic point-to-point networks at many of the UK's other airports, including its second largest, Gatwick, which has also attracted new long-haul services.

- 15 Alongside the impact of these global trends, developments at the national level are changing the UK aviation sector. These include the break up of BAA Ltd, the development of competition within the London airports system, and a new statutory framework for reducing carbon emissions. Growth in demand for aviation has been tempered by the economic downturn.
- 16 These developments were largely unforeseen by previous studies of airport capacity.
- 17 The one thing that has not changed significantly is the UK's physical airport infrastructure, and particularly runway capacity. The only new runways built in recent decades have been at London City and Manchester airports. The main London airports have benefited from new terminals, but are still reliant on runways which have been in place since the middle of the twentieth century.
- 18 The industry has responded well both to the constraints of the existing infrastructure and the new, more competitive environment. Competition between major airports may drive some further improvements over the coming years.
- 19 The UK remains one of the best connected countries in the world. Available seat capacity and the number of destinations served out of UK airports are higher than any comparable European country. Heathrow still serves the largest number of international passengers of any airport in the world.

Figure 1: UK has more seats available and serves more destinations on a daily basis than any other European country (*graphic in full document*)

But problems are starting to emerge and are likely to get worse

- 20 Heathrow is now effectively full. Gatwick is operating at more than 85% of its maximum capacity and is completely full at peak times. It is becoming more and more difficult for airports and airlines to operate efficiently within the constraints of their existing infrastructure. Smaller airports have been successful at attracting some forms of traffic, but many services – particularly in long-haul markets – rely on the volumes of demand that only exist at the country's largest airports.
- 21 As a result, the UK appears to be reaching the limits of what can be achieved within its existing airport infrastructure.
- 22 Passengers at Heathrow suffer from a high level of delay and unreliability, as a result of capacity constraints limiting the airport's day-to-day efficiency and its ability to respond to one-off events. These issues do not only affect passengers; they also limit the airport's ability to offer predictable patterns of respite from noise for local communities. As other airports reach capacity, similar impacts can be foreseen.
- 23 In terms of connectivity, Heathrow continues to have a dominant position amongst European hubs on routes to North America and other established aviation markets. However, it has not been able to build on this and establish a similar position of strength in routes to emerging economies. And the number of domestic routes to the airport is declining, restricting access from other UK regions to Heathrow's network of international services.
- 24 The current approach of forcing ever greater volumes of traffic through the existing infrastructure, if continued, would therefore have increasingly detrimental effects on the national economy, businesses, and air passengers.
- 25 The Commission's analysis suggests that the costs of failing to address these issues could amount, over a sixty-year time period, to:£18-20 billion of costs to users and providers of airport infrastructure.
£30-45 billion of costs to the wider economy.

- 26 It is not possible to predict exactly when these problems will come to a head. There are major uncertainties involved in forecasting aviation demand, and any forecasts are sensitive to assumptions around how the economy and society will develop in future.
- 27 Governments, however, have a responsibility to plan ahead for the future, particularly in the case of long-lived infrastructure like runways, which take many years to plan and build. To do so, policymakers need to consider a range of future scenarios and their implications for the amount and type of infrastructure that may be needed.
- 28 The Commission has developed a new set of forecasts which address many of the key concerns about the way the Department for Transport has previously forecast aviation demand. It has used these forecasts to test a range of scenarios for the future of the aviation sector.
- 29 Across all scenarios considered, including where the UK is meeting its climate change targets, there is significant growth in demand for aviation between now and 2050, placing additional pressure on already stressed airport infrastructure in London and the South East. The London airport system is forecast to be under very substantial pressure in 2030, and by 2050 sees demand significantly in excess of the total available capacity, even when aviation emissions are constrained to 2005 levels.
Figure 2: By 2030, Heathrow, Gatwick, London City and Luton are all predicted to be full Projected years when London and South East airports become full, in the carbon capped, capacity constrained forecast (*graphic in full document*)
Addressing these problems will require new runway infrastructure in London and the South East
- 30 Intervening to redistribute this excess demand away from airports in London and the South East does not appear to be a credible option.
- 31 The Commission has looked at options for imposing a congestion charge on the UK's busiest airports to incentivise airlines and their passengers to use other airports, including regional airports that are not yet fully utilised. Most of the new services developed at less-congested airports under this policy would simply duplicate services already available at Heathrow, such as flights between London and New York.
- 32 In addition, there is little scope for Government intervention to force airlines and passengers to use less busy airports, and past measures of this kind have rarely, if ever, achieved their objectives.
- 33 The Commission has therefore concluded that there is a clear case for one net additional runway in London and the South East, to come into operation by 2030.
- 34 In terms of the nature of the capacity that is needed, the Commission does not believe there is a binary choice between providing additional hub capacity or additional point-to-point capacity. Instead, the optimal approach is to continue to invest in an airport system that caters for a range of airline business models. This is particularly important in a competitive airports system, like London, where airlines can choose how to use the available capacity, and the market can be expected to respond dynamically to the provision of new infrastructure.
- 35 The Commission's forecasts also indicate that there is likely to be a demand case for a second additional runway in operation by 2050 or, in some scenarios, earlier. The Commission will carry out further analysis on this issue in the second phase of its work programme, including looking at the implications for any future capacity expansion of each of the new runway options shortlisted for detailed consideration. This will enable it to make recommendations to Government in its final report as to when, how and by whom the case for a second new runway should be considered.
Before new capacity becomes operational, better use can be made of existing airport infrastructure

36 There are no easy ways of addressing the emerging problems for UK airports without developing new infrastructure, but there are some steps that can be taken to make better use of existing capacity in the short-term.

37 Following a call for evidence, the Commission is recommending a range of measures including the following:

- An 'Optimisation Strategy' to improve the operational efficiency of UK airports and airspace, including:
 - **airport collaborative decision making.** A system which provides access to accurate and timely flight information for all those involved in processing aircraft to increase the predictability and speed of the aircraft turnaround process;
 - **airspace changes supporting performance based navigation.** Matching airspace structures with modern aircraft's ability to follow more accurate tracks allowing the possibility of designing closer spaced departure routes or alternating multiple arrival and departure routes for respite;
 - **enhanced en-route traffic management.** Driving greater schedule adherence; and,
 - **time based separation.** Enabling air traffic control to apply the same time spacing between aircraft irrespective of wind conditions, increasing the operational resilience of the airport in high wind conditions.
- Trials at Heathrow of measures to smooth the early morning arrival schedule to minimise delays and provide more predictable respite for local communities as part of a range of measures to increase the flexibility of runway use.
- The establishment of a Senior Delivery Group to drive forward the implementation of the Future Airspace Strategy and the delivery of the Commission's recommendations, showing strong leadership and accountability for delivery.
- The creation of an Independent Aviation Noise Authority to provide expert and impartial advice about the noise impacts of aviation and facilitate the delivery of future improvements to airspace operations.
- A package of surface transport improvements to make airports with spare capacity more attractive to airlines and passengers, including:
 - the enhancement of Gatwick Airport Station;
 - further work to develop a strategy for enhancing Gatwick's road and rail access;
 - work on developing proposals to improve the rail link between London and Stansted;
 - work to provide rail access into Heathrow from the South; and,
 - the provision of smart ticketing facilities at airport stations.

38 These measures are worthwhile on their own terms, but none of them can provide a long-term solution to the UK's airport capacity problem.

39 The Chair of the Commission wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 26 November about its recommendations on surface access to airports. HM Treasury's National Infrastructure Plan 2 published on 4 December, began the process of implementing it. The Commission welcomes this, and encourages the Government to continue to work on the delivery of the surface transport improvements.

The Commission has carried out an assessment of the options for adding extra capacity in the longer-term

40 The Commission received 52 proposals for addressing the UK's airport capacity shortfall, over 40 of which suggested building additional runway infrastructure. These proposals were based on very different visions for the future of the aviation sector.

41 The Commission's analysis looked at accommodating increasing demand through a variety of means. This included options requiring no new runway infrastructure, through

purely operational measures or by using surface transport improvements to replace the need for short-haul flights. The analysis concluded that none of these options delivered the capacity needed.

- 42** The options for new runway infrastructure were assessed against the Commission's sift criteria and on this basis two potential sites were selected for further analysis and assessment:
- a) **Gatwick Airport:** At this site the Commission's analysis will be based on a new runway over 3,000m in length spaced sufficiently south of existing runway to permit fully independent operation.
 - b) **Heathrow Airport:** At this site the Commission's analysis will consider two potential runway options:
 - A new 3,500m runway constructed to the northwest of the existing airport, as proposed by Heathrow Airport Ltd, and spaced sufficiently to permit fully independent operation.
 - An extension of the existing northern runway to the west, as proposed by Heathrow Hub Ltd, lengthening it to at least 6,000m and enabling it to be operated as two separate runways: one for departures and one for arrivals.
- 43** The Thames Estuary airport options were not at this stage shortlisted. While the potential they offered to reduce aviation noise impacts in the South East of England and to support economic development on the eastern side of London was attractive, they presented many challenges and uncertainties.
- 44** They would be extremely expensive, with the cost of an Isle of Grain airport (the most viable of those presented) around five times that of the three short-listed options at up to £112 billion. They would present major environmental issues, especially around impacts on protected sites. The new surface access infrastructure required would be very substantial, with potential cost, deliverability and environmental challenges of its own. And the overall balance of economic impacts would be uncertain – particularly as an Estuary airport would require the closure of Heathrow for commercial reasons and London City for airspace reasons.
- 45** The Commission intends to carry out additional analysis in respect of the Isle of Grain option in the first half of 2014. On this basis, it will reach a view before the end of the year as to whether such an option would offer a credible proposal for consideration alongside the short-listed options. If so, it will be subject to a similar appraisal and consultation process as for those options, although not necessarily to the same timetable.
- 46** Stansted airport options have not been short-listed. Its volumes have fallen in recent years, and there is considerable spare capacity, unlike at Gatwick. In addition, a large hub airport would be close to the cost of the Estuary, highly disruptive to airspace and would not present the same regeneration opportunities. Stansted may however be a plausible option for any second additional runway in the 2040s.
- 47** None of the other proposals was considered to be a credible option for further detailed development in the next phase of the Commission's work. The Commission's consideration of rejected proposals is set out in the supporting Appendix 2.
The Commission will now begin the next phase of its work to determine the most suitable location and design for new airport capacity
- 48** In the second phase of its work, from now until the publication of its final report in summer 2015, the designs of the short-listed proposals will be further developed and subjected to a more detailed assessment. There will be a consultation on the short-listed options and associated appraisal results in the autumn of 2014.
- 49** The Commission will publish a draft *Appraisal Framework* for consultation early in 2014. This will set out details of how scheme designs should be developed and how scheme impacts will be appraised.

- 50** The Commission will also set out early in 2014 more details of how it will take forward its further analysis of the option for a new hub airport in the Thames Estuary.
- 51** The Commission recognises that the publication of this *Interim Report* may cause uncertainty for communities close to the short-listed sites and may have some impact on local property markets. The Commission encourages the Government and those promoting schemes to consider what steps can appropriately be taken to limit these concerns, including for the limited number of people who may face an urgent need to sell their home before the Commission publishes its final report, but find themselves unable to do so.

A full copy of the Airports Commission Report, together with Annexes can be obtained from www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

News Release

For immediate use

18.12.13

Council responds to Davies Airports Commission interim report on airport capacity and remains firm against a third Heathrow runway

The council remains firmly against a third runway at Heathrow Airport – that’s the borough’s initial response to the Davies Airport Commission’s interim report on airport capacity.

Cllr Carwyn Cox, cabinet member for environmental services, responding to the commission’s interim report into airport capacity published yesterday (Tuesday 17 December), said plans for any new third runway option at Heathrow Airport would have nothing short of a catastrophic impact on borough residents.

Cllr Cox said: “Thankfully, at least the south western option appears to have been ruled out as this would have totally devastated Wraysbury and the surrounding area. The council remains firmly against any further expansion of Heathrow Airport on the scale proposed.”

The Airports Commission is taking forward two options for Heathrow for further consideration before making its recommendations to government in 2015. The first is the proposal for a north western runway while the second is to extend Heathrow’s existing northern runway to at least 6,000 metres – enabling it to operate as two independent runways.

Cllr George Bathurst, representing central Windsor, said: “Moving the airport west should not be seen as a cheap solution to reducing pollution in London. Quite apart from the impact on Windsor residents, it would very detrimental to the operation of Windsor Castle as either a royal residence or a tourist destination.”

The third suggestion from the commission is for a second runway at Gatwick Airport. This could be the best option for Royal Borough residents, especially if combined with easier rail access.

Cllr Cox added: “Both of the Heathrow proposals for further consideration will result in significant impacts on residents pretty much across the whole of the borough, not just those in towns and villages already experiencing a reduced quality of life as a result of Heathrow’s current operations, but also some newly affected communities.

“I believe these proposals are undeliverable and will have severe environmental consequences. We must remain firmly against any third runway at Heathrow as thousands of our residents will be badly affected.”

Cllr John Lenton, chairman of the borough's Aviation Forum and Horton and Wraysbury ward councillor, attended the presentation by Sir Howard Davies yesterday said afterwards: "The general feel of the discussions left me with the impression that the second Gatwick runway is the most obvious choice to proceed by 2030 and any further runway, a third Heathrow runway, would then be nearer 2040."

John Lenton also said that a new hub airport at the Isle of Grain – to replace Heathrow – was still being considered as a possibility. However, when he asked Sir Howard how the closure of Heathrow would be affected, Sir Howard said this had not really been considered but would probably require the Government to purchase Heathrow and then close it.

The document <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/airports-commission-publishes-interim-report> further proposes a number of surface improvements, including rail access into Heathrow from the south and trials at Heathrow to smooth the early morning arrival schedule to minimise stacking and delays and to provide more noise respite for local people.

A further proposal is to establish an independent noise authority to provide expert and impartial advice about the noise impacts of aviation and to facilitate the delivery of future improvements to airspace operations.

Cllr Lenton added: "There have been a number of recent local public meetings in the borough, including one in Wraysbury which attracted more than 500 people and Windsor both of which have demonstrated the grave concerns of our community about aviation noise.

"While we are hugely relieved about the lesser impact on Wraysbury residents and other neighbouring communities in the borough – we remain committed to fighting for residents affected by aircraft noise and are against any third runway at Heathrow Airport.

"We are supportive, whatever the eventual outcome, of plans for a better transport infrastructure and for improved ways of measuring and mitigating the noise impact on residents in the borough – especially those in Datchet, Eton, Eton Wick, Boulter's Lock and other parts of Maidenhead and Cookham areas who will be most affected by the north western option."

The Davies Airports Commission is due to publish its final report by summer 2015.

Ends

18. Consultation (Mandatory)

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Burbage	Leader of the Council	10/01/14	10/01/14	
Cllr Cox	Lead Member for Environment	09/01/14	10/01/14	
Mike McGaughrin	Managing Director	09/01/14	09/01/14	
Cathryn James	Strategic Director Operations	09/01/14	15/01/14	
Maria Lucas	Head of Legal Services	09/01/14	21/01/14	
Mark Lampard	Finance Partner	09/01/14		
Simon Hurrell	Head of Planning	09/01/14		
Aviation Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholders - Technical Meeting 	12/11/13 11/12/13		
External				
Public meeting with Borough Officials; Heathrow Airport, Windsor MP – Windsor Girls School 22 nd November 2013		22/11/13		
LAANC		06/12/13		

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	No

Full name of report author	Job title	Full contact no: