

July 2009

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The journal of HACAN



Campaigning to
win again!

Official: More Than 700,000 People Disturbed by Noise from Heathrow

BAA has been forced to acknowledge for the first time that over 700,000 people are affected by aircraft noise from Heathrow, more than twice the number it has previously admitted to. The new figure emerged in its Noise Action Plan for the airport, published on 15th June to signal the start of a 16 week period of public consultation. The new figures have been forced out of BAA by the European Union. The EU was critical of the way both BAA and the UK Government measured noise. It required a new method to be used when drawing up the Noise Action Plans. It has blown out of the water the previous claims by BAA and the Government that less than 300,000 people were disturbed by noise from Heathrow.



Your starter for 10. Where was the picture taken?

Vauxhall. 17-20 miles from Heathrow. The actual planes which went over in one hour. (Photo by Weedon/ Hartleben).

Beyond the 3rd Runway Battle

We may well have won the battle against expansion. But there is much to do. The current noise climate is intolerable. **Inside:** our future plans, including how you can respond to the noise action plan consultation and news of a new night flight campaign.

Conservative Manifesto to include pledge to scrap 3rd Runway

Theresa Villiers, the Conservative Spokesperson on Transport, has made it clear that the Conservative's manifesto for the next General Election will contain a pledge to scrap the 3rd runway at Heathrow. With the Liberal Democrats also firmly opposed and Labour trailing badly in the opinion polls, it is a racing certainty that the 3rd runway will not see the light of day. Both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have also pledged to retain runway alternation. Earlier this year Theresa Villiers told Parliament that expansion plans would inflict "devastating damage" on the environment and on people's quality of life. She said that the economic arguments for a third runway had been "conclusively rebutted" and there was "no convincing evidence" that the airport would go into decline without expansion.

Leading business people and six major trade unions have also come out against expansion at Heathrow, shattering the claims of the pro-expansion lobby that they are fully supported by the business community and the trade union movement.

For more details of business opposition, see next page

Business Support for 3rd Runway Crumbles

The business support for a third runway is ebbing away. Earlier this year some of the most prominent figures in the business world wrote to the Times to say they rejected the business case for a third runway. We understand that over the coming months we will hear more from some of these people.



In a recent independent survey of small and large businesses (Continental Research, November 2008), 95 per cent of businesses said a third runway would make little or no difference to them.

Business Figures Against 3rd Runway

Ian Cheshire, Chief Executive, Kingfisher

Russell Chambers, Adviser, Credit Suisse

Jon Moulton, Founder, Alchemy Partners

Charles Dunstone, Chief Executive, Carphone Warehouse

David Levin, Chief Executive, United Business Media

Dominic Murphy, Partner, KKR

Justin King, Chief Executive, J Sainsbury

Sir Roy Gardner, Chairman, Compass Group

Jeremy Darroch, Chief Executive, BSKyB

James Murdoch, Chairman and Chief Executive, News Corporation

Howard Leigh, Managing Director Cavendish Corporate Finance

Martin Armstrong

Lord Young of Graffham, former President of the IoD

And Trade Unions

UNISON; RMT; TSSA; ASLEF; PCS; CONNECT

HACAN Comment

The aviation industry, along with its cheerleaders in the Department for Transport, has been found out. The economic case for expansion does not stand up. It was largely based on the dodgy figures in the Oxford Economic Forecasting reports. HACAN played an early and important role in exposing the faulty arguments. The CE Delft Report we published last year found that the prosperity of London was not dependent on Heathrow attracting more transfer passengers than other key European airports because of the huge number of people, including business people, who come to London as a destination. It showed that, while expansion might be in the interests of BA and BAA, it was not required for the health of the economy as a whole. The Conservatives, the traditional Party of business, has run with and developed the argument. So, too, the Liberal Democrats. And now leading businesses and trade unions as well. The game is up for BAA, BA and the DfT.

The Business Letter to the Times

The full letter from the business community is on our website...

Sir,

It is important to understand that many individuals in the business community do not believe that the rationale put forward for the third runway at Heathrow is sufficient to justify the Government's recent decision. The benefits to business are unclear and unproven. We see little benefit in Heathrow's increased reliance on transfer passengers. A new runway comes with no guarantee of securing a greater number of international destinations or domestic connections. Indeed, the most recent capacity increases at Heathrow that came as the cap on flight movements was raised resulted in exactly the reverse — that is, an increase in the number of frequencies between certain already well-served high-density international city pairs and an overall continued decrease in the number of destinations served by Heathrow. We have no reason to believe this trend would not simply continue with the addition of a further runway. In a recent independent survey of small and large businesses (Continental Research, November 2008), 95 per cent of businesses — said a third runway would make little or no difference to them.

Insufficient money has been invested over the past 15 years in transforming the Heathrow infrastructure on the ground to reduce congestion and delays caused by the outdated alignment of buildings, jetties and parking areas. Additionally, new high-speed rail links directly connecting

The business case for the third runway simply does not stack up. To say that all those from the business community support the third runway is wrong.

Heathrow to Scotland via the Midlands and the North of England will also clearly have an enormous impact in releasing significant capacity at Heathrow. All this has yet to be fully understood. At the same time the Government must reforecast all the growth assumptions made by BAA, the owner, and the airlines to take account of the significant recent falls in passenger volumes as a result of economic decline and fuel-price volatility.

The quality of life impact is too important to ignore. The Government has already admitted that air quality in the Heathrow area breaches EU standards. The increase in movements and ground transport from a third runway would put people's health further at risk. Climate change cannot be ignored and our approach to transport must reflect the seriousness with which we take our Climate Act target to cut emissions by 80 per cent by 2050. In addition, we must avoid the increased noise and safety issues resulting from a rise in the number of aircraft passing directly over a densely populated city such as London.

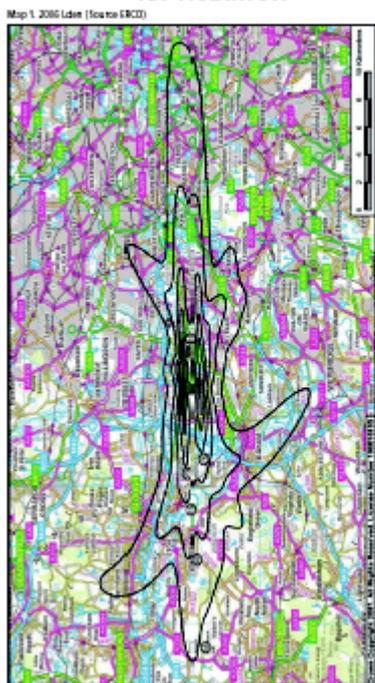
We recognise the business need for air travel and that strong air links between the UK and the rest of the world are required, but the business case for the third runway simply does not stack up. To say that all those from the business community support the third runway is wrong. It is a misconception and one that we wish to put right.

The Real Noise Impact of Heathrow

In itself, the Heathrow Noise Action Plan may be hardly worth the paper it is written on but its long-term significance for the way noise is measured may be very far-reaching.

The Heathrow Noise Action Plan could turn out to be much more important than BAA or the Government ever intended. In drawing it up, BAA was required by the EU to use a more accurate way of measuring the impact of noise on people. The result is a grudging admission of what residents, many noise experts, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and others have been telling both BAA and the Government for years: they have been seriously under-estimating the number of people affected by noise from Heathrow.

Annex 3: ERCD strategic noise maps for Heathrow



Until now both the Department for Transport and the aviation industry only admitted that aircraft noise was a real problem for people living within what it called the 57 decibel contour. The contour covered most of the boroughs of Richmond and Hounslow but didn't cover places such as Putney, Ealing or Fulham where noise is clearly a problem. To the west of the airport, it just about included all of Windsor. Despite the fact it didn't tally with reality, the DfT and BAA continued to refuse to change the way they measured the noise.

How to Respond to the Noise Action Plan

Respond to BAA Action Plan Consultation, GfK NOP Datacentre, Caxton House, 91 Victoria St, Chelmsford, CM1 1JW

Deadline: 5th October

What are Noise Action Plans?

The EU Noise Directive requires member states to draw up noise actions plans for the busiest roads, railways and airports. They are meant to lay out how the governments will cut noise. Astonishingly, but legally, the UK Government has asked the airports themselves to draw up the action plans for aircraft noise.

Will they make any difference?

Probably not. The Noise Directive has given member states a way out. Noise action plans don't need to be implemented if the cost of doing so would be excessive.

Is the Heathrow Action Plan any good?

No, it's dreadful! It contains lots of words but no more than the minor measures BAA would have taken anyway.

How should I respond?

HACAN is advising that responses should simply outline the measures that would make a real difference to the noise climate:

- **A ban on night flights**
- **A steeper glideslope**, particularly for landing aircraft (BAA has agreed to review this).
- **The use of noise measurements which are based on the World Health Organisation's recommended standards** – the new method of noise goes some way towards this but WHO recommends a lower cut off point than 55 decibels in order to capture everybody affected by the noise.
- **The protection of existing quiet areas**. This is the one clear requirement of the Noise Directive. It can include areas which are quiet for part of the day – places such as Osterly Park which benefit from runway alternation.
- **Serious money put into mitigation measures** for areas worst affected rather than the paltry sums currently on offer.

The consultation document can be found at http://www.heathrowairport.com/assets/Internet/Heathrow/Heathrow%20downloads/Static%20files/LHR_NAP.pdf

What's changed in way noise is measured?

Until now noise was averaged out across a 16 hour day (7am – 11pm). And then an average for the year was calculated. If noise averaged out at over 57 decibels, the DfT decided it presented a problem for people. The EU now requires separate measurements for day, evening and night. (Five decibels is added on to the evening level and 10 decibels to the night level to allow for the lower background noise levels at these times). The day, night and evening results are then combined to get the average over a 24 hour period, known as Lden. The new method, while far from perfect because it still relies on averages, better reflects how people hear noise. And, critically, it requires a 55 decibel cut-off point. The World Health Organisation argues it should be lower still but it is the first move in the right direction for decades. And there will be no way back to the old methods.

Campaigning on All Fronts

HACAN's campaigning continues on all fronts. We may feel confident that we have seen off expansion but there is much to do to improve the existing situation.

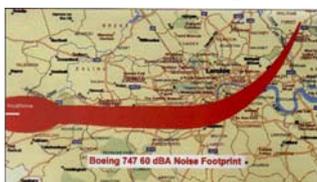
New Night Flight Campaign



In the Autumn we will be launching *Nightmare* – a new campaign to get a ban on night flights. The current agreement with the airlines runs out in October 2012. This means that, within a year of taking office, the next Government will need

to start thinking about night flights. We are hoping for a Europe-wide campaign to tackle night flights.

Flight Path Study



We are commissioning a report into what operational measures could be put into place to lessen noise for communities. It will look

at things like steeper gildeslopes, Continuous Descent Approach and dispersal of flight paths.

Flight Path Watch

We are getting increasing reports of planes not sticking to the agreed runway alternation patterns where they are meant to switch runways at 3pm. We are putting on our website a facility where you can report planes in the wrong place.

Check out our new-look website. We are also now on YouTube under the name HeathrowCampaignTV and on Twitter under the name HACAN1. There are also of course a number of Heathrow Facebook sites.

Annual Meeting

Thursday 8th October

7.30pm

St Lukes, The Avenue, Kew
(nearest station Kew Gardens; some parking available)

The meeting is quite informal. A good chance to hear what we are doing and to share your thoughts with us.

Joining HACAN

Details are on our website. Or you can simply write a cheque for £13, payable to HACAN, and send it to PO Box 339, Twickenham, TW1 2XF. Our success depends on your support.

Renewals: Please tick all the boxes on the form, including the last 3 questions, as we use the form to update our database.

Third Runway Campaign

The 3rd runway has not yet been dropped. BAA has got the Government's permission to draw up detailed plans for the new runway. They will be ready at the earliest by the end of 2010, well next June, the last date for a General Election. The campaign will go on. At the time of writing we are waiting to hear whether we have been give permission to mount a Judicial Review against the Government's decision in January to give the green light to the 3rd runway.

- Keep checking our website for upcoming events, actions, rallies and demonstrations.

Information

Track Flight Paths on Screen

Check out Webtrak on www.baa.com/noise

BAA Complaints Line - 0800 344 844

It is not usually staffed. The service is useful for getting factual advice or registering a complaint. But don't expect action from BAA.

Check the Newspapers

For a daily digest of aviation stories carried by the national media, try the excellent (and free!) website: www.transportinfo.org.uk

If you want regular news by email.....

The newsletter comes out twice a year. If you want a more regular update on news, events and actions you can take, sign up to Update which is emailed out to people usually about twice a month. If you want to receive it, email us on info@hacan.org.uk

Direct Action - it's not just a youth thing

HACAN does not organise direct action but if you are interested it taking part in direct action or simply want to find out more about it, we can put you in contact with the right people – email us on info@hacan.org.uk or call 0207 7737 6641 or contact Plane Stupid: www.planestupid.com

Take Off

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Newsletter by email

In the interests of economy, we would like to start emailing the newsletter where possible. If you would like it by email and have not yet let us know, please email info@hacan.org.uk