

STRAND ON THE GREEN ASSOCIATION

Heathrow Expansion

The Government has opened the consultation for BAA's plans for a major expansion of Heathrow, including:

- A new, third runway, to operate in "mixed" mode, i.e. take-offs alternating with landings. This runway would now be long enough to take all but the largest, 4-engined aircraft, and would no longer be restricted, as originally proposed, to smaller planes.
- An end to the existing runway alternation. At present, one runway handles landings until 3pm and the other handles take-offs. At 3pm, the use of the runways is switched. This means that those affected get half a day's respite. Each week, the pattern is reversed, so that the runway used for morning landings in one week is used for morning take-offs in the second week. By ending alternation, BAA could handle a greater number of aircraft movements by using both runways simultaneously, with landings and take-offs alternating on each runway.
- BAA want the Government to end the present limit of 480,000 aircraft movements per annum. An end to runway alternation would allow the number to rise to 540,000 (12½%); adding a third runway, with runway alternation re-introduced would allow a further expansion to over 700,000 movements, an overall increase of nearly 50% from today's levels. A later end to alternation would probably allow a further increase to 800,000 movements.
- There are other changes proposed as part of the overall plan, including a new 6th terminal to go with the new runway.

What would this mean for Strand on the Green?

1. The new runway would be parallel to the existing Northern runway and approximately one mile to the North. This means that, in addition to the planes that now pass in front of us, landing aircraft would also pass directly behind the Strand. We would be caught between the two runways.
2. There would be no respite period. The end of runway alternation would mean that there would be no daytime break in the use of the present Northern runway. It is possible that runway alternation would be re-introduced once the third runway was in place, but – we suspect – only so long as it did not prevent further growth in traffic. There would be **no** alternation in the use of the new runway.
3. Atmospheric pollution has already breached EU legal limits. The Government now asserts that "cleaner" aircraft and vehicle engines would allow this enormous increase in the use of Heathrow without any increase in pollutants from today's levels.
4. There is already a strenuous debate with Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth about the global warming implications of Heathrow's growth, which would affect everybody. As this is not a local issue, we are leaving that part of the argument to others who are better qualified to handle it, but, rest assured, they have the Strand on the Green Association's full support.

5. You do not need us to tell you that the amount of traffic using Heathrow would inevitably increase dramatically.

What else?

A draft copy of the Association's detailed objections to BAA's proposals is attached. We are working with other local groups, including HACAN Clear Skies, to make sure that our own and other voices make an impact. We are sickened by the hypocrisy and cynicism of the authorities, who seem to have accepted all the arguments of the commercial lobby. Remember that:

- Heathrow is simply in the wrong place. In the United States, New York moved its major airport to Jamaica Bay (JFK), where most landing planes approach over the sea. Paris built the large capacity Charles de Gaulle airport well away from major population centres, and the same was done in Tokyo and Hong Kong. The UK had the chance to build a three or four runway airport at Maplin in the 70's but decided to develop Stansted and expand Heathrow instead. Now, with no more room and still no long-term policy, the authorities have yielded to BAA and the airlines who would prefer to stay where they are. They gain and we all suffer the noise and environmental damage at no cost to them: a free motorway in the sky.
- A limit of 480,000 movements has been imposed, but now it inhibits growth, they want to abandon it. The Terminal 5 enquiry report said the limit should be maintained, even if there were to be a third runway.
- During that enquiry, BAA were asked if they wanted to build a third runway. They said they had no wish to do so, since it would complicate the airport's operation and would not be needed: a new Terminal 5 was all they wanted.
- BAA and the authorities, who appear to be joined at the hip, now tell us that because of quieter planes and cleaner engines, a 50% increase in Heathrow's capacity can be handled with no increase in noise or pollution. They have abandoned most other undertakings about Heathrow bar one (see below); what credibility do they have when they make these statements?
- Thus far, and despite several attempts to end the limit, a restriction on the number of night flights has been maintained. Operationally, this has some attractions for BAA, since it allows for necessary maintenance work and saves the need to staff terminals round the clock. But you may have noticed that arriving aircraft approach from around 4.15am onwards, and in fact, the present night flight limits are already often breached "for operational reasons". The paper you should have received from the Department for Transport is strangely silent about night flights, but we cannot be too confident that the ban will last.

What can you do?

- 1** Read the full debate on www.hacan.org.uk
- 2** Complete the tear off slip attached and send it back to the Strand on the Green Association, adding the names of all those in your household who are opposed to the BAA's plans.
- 3** Complete the detailed questionnaire attached to the Department of Transport's circular, particularly sections A and B. (Sections C and D are less significant changes for Strand on the Green, and the

Department's explanation is too convoluted to reproduce briefly here. If you have time and wish to complete these sections, please do so.

4 Persuade your neighbours to join the Strand on the Green Association and add weight to our argument.

5 Attend one of the two remaining public exhibitions and make your views known directly. The dates and venues are listed below:

- **14th January 2008 - Sheraton Heathrow Hotel, Colnbrook
10am – 8pm**
- **16th January 2008 - Holiday Inn, Brentford Lock
10am – 8pm**
- **18th January 2008 - Adult Community Centre, Parkshot
Centre, Parkshot, Richmond, 10am – 8pm**

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My address is:.....

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Postcode:.....

We, the under-signed, being resident at the above address, oppose the plans for a third runway and the end of runway alternation. We fully support the views expressed on our behalf by the Strand on the Green Association.

Signed

Name (please print)

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Please return to: Strand on the Green Association, 12A Spring Grove, London W4 3NH, before 22nd January 2008. If you want to add any other comments, please do so and we will pass them on.

If you are not already a member of the Strand on the Green Association and would like to join, please return this form with your subscription (£5 per household) to the address above and we will enrol you for 2008. We promise to keep you in touch with developments on this and other local issues.