

## **Airports Commission: Consultation on Air Quality Assessment**

This note sets out how the Airports Commission is consulting on recently completed analysis relating to the air quality assessment of the three options for additional capacity shortlisted by the Commission in its *Interim Report*.

Between November 2014 and February 2015, the Airports Commission conducted a national [consultation](#) on its appraisal of the three options for additional runway capacity which had been shortlisted in its 2013 [Interim Report](#). In addition to a [Consultation Document](#) the Commission published business cases and sustainability assessments in which it assessed each option following the approach set out in its [Appraisal Framework](#). That consultation has closed, with more than 70,000 responses having been received.

The Consultation materials included information on the air quality impacts of the three shortlisted options, generated through calculations of mass emissions due to unmitigated airport expansion. This enabled an assessment of the risk of breaching national emissions ceilings, EU limit values and local air quality objectives. In paragraphs 2.56 and 2.57 of the *Consultation Document*, however the Commission noted that before reaching any final recommendations it would supplement the high-level air quality modelling presented for consultation with more detailed dispersion modelling to provide greater assurance about the air quality implication of each proposal and the scope for mitigation. This work is now complete and is set out in detail in the report accompanying this note.

By way of summary, the report shows that the dispersion modelling carried out by the Commission has in most cases confirmed the Commission's earlier analysis, but in a small number of area has resulted in a slightly different outcome to that presented previously, as set out below.

- In the consultation documents the Commission calculated broadly the same air quality outcomes for both options at Heathrow airport. This conclusion has been confirmed in respect of the national level impacts and the impacts on local authority air quality monitoring sites, but the further work has found differences between the two options relating to performance against EU limit values which were not apparent from the analysis presented for consultation.
- The results of the dispersion modelled performance against EU limit values for the two Heathrow schemes is set out on page 66 for Heathrow Northwest Runway (NWR) and page 92 for Heathrow Extended Northern Runway (ENR). This shows, consistent with the Commission's earlier analysis, that EU limits may be exceeded at a small number of monitoring sites as a result of each of the proposals for expansion at Heathrow but with the extent of the exceedance and the level of challenge associated without mitigation now different for the two schemes.

- The results of the dispersion modelled performance against EU limits for Gatwick remain in line with the analysis published in our consultation document and can be found at page 44.

The Commission's assessment of a range of potential mitigations, including those proposed by each of the scheme promoters, can be found on pages 51-58 for Gatwick, pages 73-84 for Heathrow NWR, and pages 97-108 for Heathrow ENR.

The Commission is inviting comments on this further evidence, which will be relevant to the Commission's assessment of air quality impacts in **Chapter 10** of the [Sustainability Assessment](#) for each scheme and on the monetised impacts of air quality in the economic case (**Chapter 2** of the [Business Case](#) for each scheme)..

In its *Consultation Document* the Commission asked eight questions relating to its appraisal. In this consultation, the Commission considers this new analysis is most relevant to the questions inviting responses on specific areas of the Commission's appraisal, in this case air quality:

- **Q5:** Do you have any comments on how the Commission has carried out its appraisal of specific topics (as defined by the Commission's 16 appraisal modules), including methodology and results?
- **Q6:** Do you have any comments on the Commission's sustainability assessments, including methodology and results?
- **Q7:** Do you have any comments on the Commission's business cases, including methodology and results?

However, respondents may discuss any elements of the Commission's consultation which they consider are affected by this additional evidence. They may therefore refer to any of the eight consultation questions in submissions.

This consultation will commence on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May and close at midday on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May. Responses may either be sent electronically or by mail to:

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or

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