

Submission on behalf of

Old Windsor Parish Council

The Aviation Commission Secretariat,
6th Floor,
Sanctuary Buildings,
20 Great Smith Street,
LONDON SW1P 3BT.

6th September 2013

Aviation Commission Discussion Paper 05 – Aviation Noise

Dear Sirs,

My colleagues have asked me to respond to Discussion Paper 05 – Aviation Noise, as this is a major cause of concern to many of the 5,000 residents of the village of Old Windsor, an almost 100% residential community bordered by Thameside bungalows, fields, Windsor Great Park and Runnymede. The separate town Windsor is a further 2 miles from Heathrow.

Old Windsor would be a quiet community but for the fact that its fringe is aligned within 6 miles from the rural end of the Southern runway and both arrival and departure aircraft overfly it at relatively low altitude. The fact that Heathrow is proposing a new South Western runway option is of enormous concern as the end of it would be only 1,100 yards from the fringe of the village.

There is some divergence of opinion in this community because a low percentage of residents have or know of neighbours in fairly senior employment closely related to Heathrow.

The currently used Noise Metrics are a major concern, as the 57dB noise contours derived from the Leq system deprive almost everyone any noise mitigation whatsoever, despite frequent high levels of noise annoyance and interference with everyday activities. The greatly increased frequency of flights has overtaken the problem of the overall volume of aircraft noise, so a noise assessment which takes account of flight frequencies / numbers is essential for current and of course future use.

In this regard the failure to honour governmental promises at the outset of the £1.4 million 6 year ANASE study is of paramount importance, as the dismissal of it means that Old Windsor residents and millions of others suffer under a noise measurement system based on outdated technology which does not address the completely changed flight patterns of the last 30 years. An adaptation or replacement of ANASE is absolutely essential, especially as aviation activity will continue to expand.

There is a suspicion that the suspension of the use of the horrendously noisy Concorde alongside other noisy planes may be a big factor in the industry's claims about the reduction in noise volumes, but far too many aircraft are still too noisy and interrupt normal conversation.

Some airlines employ different operating procedures in regard to when the landing gear is lowered on approach. Those which lower it earlier create far more 'airframe' turbulence and noise for more people than those which lower it later. It is not appropriate to place blame here but some airlines

lower the wheels 8 miles from touchdown over Windsor whereas others seem to leave this to half that distance.

The peaks of aircraft noise above the ambient noise of a quiet semi rural community is far more disturbing than the same noise in relation to a noisier ongoing background noise, but the current noise metrics do not take account of this. It is one factor why Night Flight Noise offends far more people than daytime noise, and of course exacerbates sleep disturbance. I will not go into all the problems that creates, but will emphasise that the apparent lack of strict restrictions on very late night time take offs and the doubling of the number of early morning scheduled arrivals (under differing operating procedures noted above) by far less publicised early arrivals is offensive and totally unacceptable to many Old Windsor residents. Careful consideration should be given to why night flights from and to Heathrow should be allowed when they are banned at so many other international airports – including European ones.

Your kind consideration of these comments will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Beer,
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