

KEITH TAYLOR  
Green Party  
*for the South East of England*



Airports Commission  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT  
[estuary.studies@airports.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:estuary.studies@airports.gsi.gov.uk)

20<sup>th</sup> May 2014

**Consultation response on the Inner Thames Estuary feasibility studies**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to respond to the 'Inner Thames Estuary feasibility studies' Consultation, and to register my opposition to all Estuary airport options.

Firstly, I would like to stress that we do not need any more airport capacity in the UK as this will increase harmful climate emissions, jeopardizing our ability to avoid runaway climate change and make meeting out obligatory CO2 emission reductions even more difficult to deliver.

The Committee on Climate Change has indicated that even if the volume of air travel in the UK was reduced to 2005 levels, by 2050 this would account for 23% of the UK's total emissions budget. Recent scientific work suggests that if the non-CO2 impacts of aviation, such as nitrogen oxides and water vapour, are taken into account this could double our estimates of aviation's climate damage. These figures clearly show that a rapidly growing aviation sector cannot co-exist with serious attempts to tackle climate change.

With regards to the South East, Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted already have more than double the number of flights to key business destinations each week compared with Paris, Frankfurt and Amsterdam. A new airport would probably necessitate the closing of existing airports, with resulting problems from unemployment.

These proposals would also have a damaging impact on an internationally important habitat for birds. According to the RSPB, twelve species of bird are found in the Thames Estuary in internationally important numbers, the highest concentration anywhere in the South East region. This area is one of the world's top five waterbird sites, and a key EU protected migration route - any plans to build a new airport in the estuary could therefore well be illegal under EU laws which exist to protect areas of special environmental significance.

Finally, I am deeply concerned by the impact this airport would have on the quality of life of those living in Kent and Essex, from the noise and air pollution created by a new airport.

Air pollution contributes to over 200,000 premature deaths in the UK every year and the UK is legally obliged to meet EU air pollution limits. The government must therefore make meeting these air quality limits a priority if we are to avoid infringement procedures from the EU and tackle this invisible killer.

As well as the pollution from the aircraft itself, any airport expansion would presumably require the building of significant additional transport infrastructure to connect to the airport, which would result in increased traffic and potential congestion.

I submitted a detailed response to the Government's Consultation on the Draft Aviation Policy Framework in 2012, which includes many points which are relevant to this call for evidence. My response can be read on my website at: <http://www.keithtaylormep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Green-MEPs-response-to-the-Draft-Aviation-Policy-Framework.pdf>

I am aware that there are many local campaign groups who are working tirelessly to oppose these proposals, and I fully support their efforts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Taylor', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Keith Taylor, Green MEP, South East England.