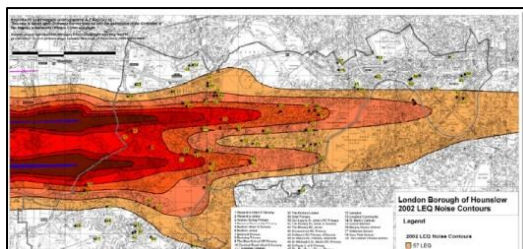


## RESPONSE TO AIRPORTS COMMISSION – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015

Ruth Cadbury

### INTRODUCTION

I have been a Councillor for 25 of the 28 years since 1986 on the London Borough of Hounslow, always representing Brentford and until 2013 holding senior positions as Committee Chair or Executive/Cabinet member. In October 2013 I was selected as the Labour Party Parliamentary candidate for Brentford and Isleworth for the forthcoming general election.



Being next to the eastern end of Heathrow's two runways, Hounslow is the noisiest local authority area in Britain. It is built-up right up the perimeter fence, and about half the boroughs homes lie within the 59dBA noise contour. During the 70% of the time the airport is on westerly operations, these residents experience a plane overhead every 60 – 90 seconds for 8 hours each day. On easterly operations every third aircraft flies over any particular point.

In 2002 as the lead for the Environment & Transport, I was the Executive member covering Heathrow issues. BAA, having promised in the Terminal 5 Inquiry that they were not seeking a third Runway, subsequently and fairly quickly reversed that position. They announced they would indeed be seeking to apply for a third runway and thus seek to overturn the flight cap and alternation pattern agreed by Government as a condition of Terminal 5 being approved.

I knew that the residents of Hounslow borough would be the ones most affected by expansion at Heathrow. Those not already under the landing path of the existing two runways, would be under the landing path for Runway 3. And the current Runway 3 proposal is further south than the one proposed then. Hounslow Council started to explain locally and nationally the unique impact that Heathrow has on the borough, to ensure that the voice of local residents and their representatives were heard in the national debate.

There has long been strong opposition among local residents to expansion at Heathrow. Furthermore evidence was beginning to emerge in the last 10 years about the impact aircraft noise has on health and learning. These include the RANCH study of children's cognitive learning in proximity to airports (published in the Lancet), and emerging work on the impact of disturbed sleep patterns on physical health and the ANASE study commissioned by the DoT on perceptions of noise. I knew that we had a duty to protect the health and learning opportunities of future residents and children of the borough by ensuring that Heathrow's activities were contained within the flight cap and respite regimes agreed as a condition of Terminal 5. It is essential for improved quality of life for those living next to the biggest airport in the UK, that the noise should gradually decline as engine technology allowed rather than quieter aircraft be used as a justification for expansion.

As a result of that work, Hounslow secured for all schools and community buildings around Heathrow, a £25m Community Buildings Noise Insulation Scheme – and I continue to be involved on the steering group advising Heathrow on the spend within the limited parameters set for that scheme.

During the passage of the first Civil Aviation Bill we received a Government commitment to retain the runway alternation and night flights regime, a commitment which holds today.

Ruth Cadbury

**Q 1 Both the proposed Runway 3 and Heathrow Hub significantly breach this commitment made when the first Civil Aviation Act was approved. Runway 3 will mean that the whole of Heston, Osterley and Brentford, along with large areas of Chiswick not currently under the landing paths to the existing runways, will experience very significantly greater levels of noise. Heathrow Hub will be impossible to deliver within the parameters of the current alternation scheme .**

## **Q5 - NOISE METRICS and AREAS AFFECTED BY NOISE**

I welcome the AC's approach to noise which is a great improvement on that previously used by the DfT and I welcome the use of a number of metrics and not only the 54Laeq of the past. However these do not sufficiently capture the full extent of noise disturbance experienced by local residents particularly those who live between two runway landing paths.

Hounslow borough is already the noisiest place in Britain and both Heathrow proposals will make an already unacceptable situation a lot worse for residents under the existing, and the future flight paths.

## **Q2 MEASURES TO REDUCE OR MITIGATE NOISE**

Respite periods must be an essential element in any mitigation package. When flights are overhead every 60 – 90 seconds for hours at a time, residents and schools need to know that there will be respite, and when. Mitigation should be based on the following principles;

- Mitigation schemes should be statutory and not be administered by, or funded through, the discretion of the airport operator.
- Every community should get a period of respite
- No community should get less respite than at present
- No community should experience a significant rise in aircraft numbers nor noise
- The needs of people near 2 or more flight paths need to be included in all respite arrangements.
- All respite arrangements must be legally binding
- There should be a significant improvement on the current night flight regime, with a complete ban from 11pm until at least 6am.
- All homes, whatever their structure, tenure, and ownership should benefit from a regularly reviewed insulation scheme
- Insulation Schemes should continue to cover community and public buildings and should cover the whole building, not selected parts
- Insulation schemes should be sufficient to enable that building to fulfil the relevant Building Standards for noise and air quality, and help should be provided if these are updated.
- Insulations schemes should always be available as circumstances in a property changes, or when old measures are no longer effective.
- Funding for insulation and other physical schemes should not be switched on and off at the whim of the airport operator.

#### **Q4 FACTORS NOT FULLY ADDRESSED BY THE COMMISSION.**

##### **AIR POLLUTION**

Air quality continues to deteriorate along the A4/M4 corridor through our borough between Heathrow and London. Much of this is vehicle-related, although much of THIS is generated by Heathrow traffic. In addition, residents underneath the landing paths regularly tell me about smelling aviation fuel, and witness a coating of oil on windows, garden furniture and when leaving clothes to air-dry.

The Commission needs to do substantially more work on Air pollution in order for more informed responses to be made and I look forward to this work being carried out.

##### **HEALTH IMPACTS**

Many more people are affected by aviation around Heathrow than around Gatwick, and therefore many more experience the adverse impact of aviation – a baseline study should have been carried out to assess the health and well-being of local communities

- It appears that throughout the Commission appears to weight economic development above health and well-being as factors in the assessment
- DoH and Health England have not been consulted in the development of the Framework

##### **EMPLOYMENT & THE ECONOMY**

More work could have been done on the local economic impacts for sectors and business not directly related to Heathrow.

Heathrow is, and must remain, a significant employer locally. Heathrow's current offer on NEETS and local training and recruitment is the least such a large employer and contractor should be happening anyway to enhance the opportunities for local residents. The airport could have spent resources to date on seeking to reduce unemployment, but has chosen not to. It is essential that the airport provides a structured programme to ensure all entry-level jobs provide quality training and opportunities for career progression.

There is a danger that the economy locally is already too dependent on one source of employment and business growth. Heathrow lies in the Thames Corridor close to London. Other sectors are thriving and growing. Whilst many businesses value their proximity to the airport, they also have to compete with the airport for what are already scarce resources here: land and premises, skilled and unskilled staff, road space and market and social housing. They also experience the noise and have to pay the mitigation costs.

##### **SURFACE ACCESS**

Traffic congestion around Heathrow has a significant impact on economic viability and on quality of life. No impact assessment of the impact on local roads of expansion has been made nor their potential economic impacts. It is essential that the airport provides significant surface access improvements, to reduce vehicle-generated pollution and achieve a significant level of modal shift. The airport should fund major improvements to rail, bus, light rail and tube provision around and to the airport.

## FURTHER ISSUES

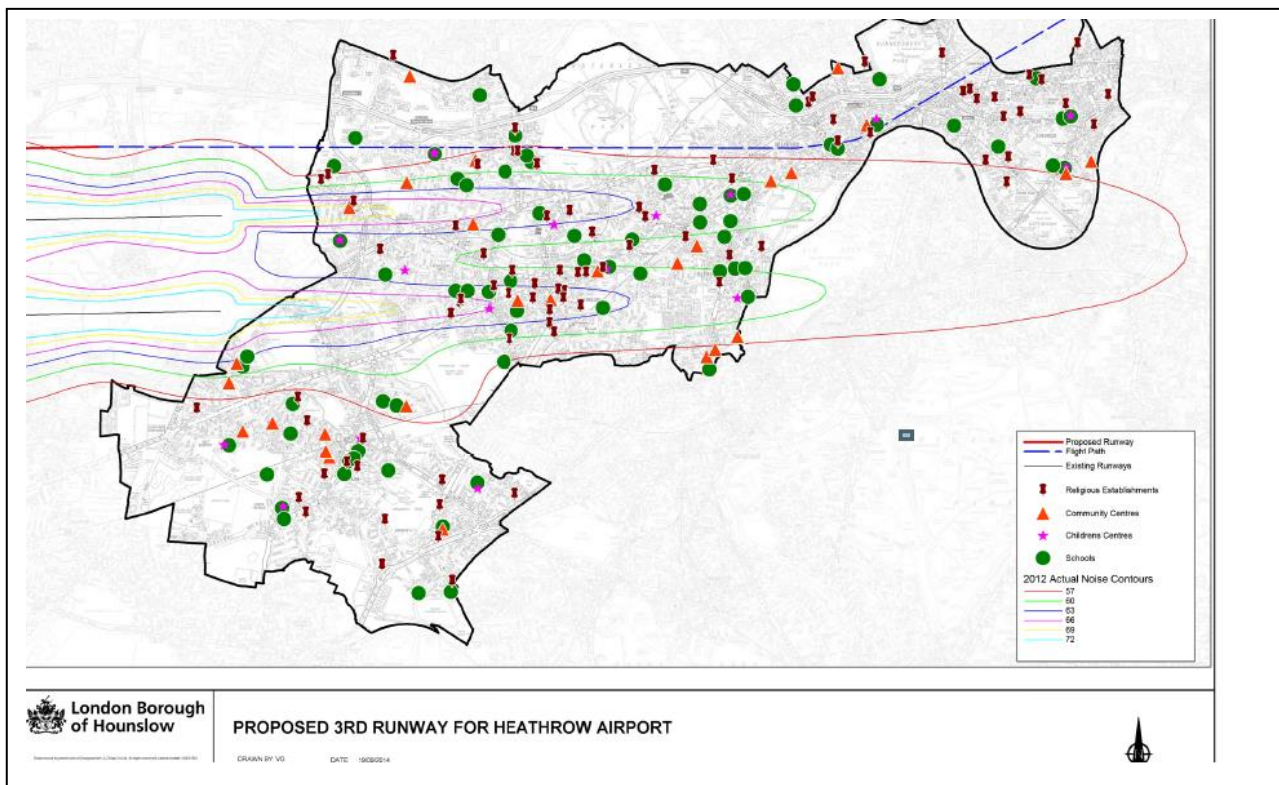
### Q8 INDEPENDENT NOISE REGULATOR

I welcome the establishment of an independent noise regulator. This post must be completely independent of the Government, the airports, of local authorities and of community organisations.

**Ruth Cadbury**

Brentford Ward Councillor  
Labour's Parliamentary Candidate

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Map: 2012 Actual noise contours and Community facilities, with flight path for Runway 3 as informed by Heathrow Airport proposals documentation

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