

## RESPONSE TO AIRPORT COMMISSION CONSULTATION

The members of the Heathrow Airport Consultative Committee (HACC) welcome the opportunity to respond to the Commission's consultation on its three shortlisted options for airport expansion in the south east. The varied views within HACC (in common with most other airport consultative committees) make it inappropriate for us to respond to every aspect of your consultation. However, we have identified some aspects where we can all agree, and these are laid out in the following paragraphs.

HACC acknowledges that an increase in long term aviation capacity in the south east can bring economic growth both to the region and to the UK as a whole together with growth in employment at whichever airport might be chosen for expansion. Our response is not in support of any one of the proposals, but it aims to point up those areas that would be of real concern were either of the options for Heathrow to be that which the Airport Commission recommends to Government.

The appraisal process has been comprehensive and, generally, thorough. However, as stated in our letter to you of 12 Dec 14, we feel that no sensible comparison can be drawn between the proposals until your estimates on their effects on air quality, and their possible mitigation, are available. Clearly, any proposal that could not meet the EU emission limits would have to be reworked. It would be helpful if you would publish your target date for publication of the data and indicate how these data would be brought into the process.

Already contained within the proposals are forecasts for significant demand for more local housing to meet the growth in airport worker numbers. At a time where there is already unsatisfied demand, local authorities are likely to need support in meeting the forecast increased demand. If they cannot meet that demand, the additional workers needed during and after expansion are likely to be commuting from distances greater than ideal, thus increasing the pressure on surface access to the airport.

HACC believes that effective, efficient, high quality and resilient surface transport links to airports benefit not just air passengers and airport staff but also the local population and its environment. It must be an integral part of the sustainable growth of any airport. The estimated growth in passengers and airport workers alike could overload severely the current surface access options at Heathrow. A modern integrated transport system can play a decisive role in attracting international investment, offering greater accessibility for passengers with reduced mobility (a growing percentage of the population), and easing surface transport disruptions for the local population near transport hubs. Above all, only a substantial and multi-modal public transport system can encourage passengers and airport workers away from their cars and thus ensure minimum impact of surface transport emissions on air quality around airports.



Should either of the proposals for Heathrow be recommended by the Airport Commission, the establishment of mainline rail links to the south and west will be essential. Furthermore, the planning processes for these increased means of access will need to lead airport development; they are already desirable in their own right and must be fully operational before any significant increase in airport activity.

It is clear that the impact of noise is a major concern to all the communities around Heathrow. The use of the 55Lden and N70 metrics are generally welcomed in those communities as more accurately reflecting the way people hear noise. Effective respite will be important as it is often the frequency of noise events, rather than their averaged noise levels, that seem to have most impact. It is timely that the airport is establishing a local noise forum. It will need to ensure that it increases transparency to help build confidence in the data on which future decisions will be made. HACC also welcomes the introduction of Heathrow's 10 point blueprint for noise reduction and the work done through Sustainable Aviation and others to mitigate noise and emissions and it hopes that these will be further developed with attendant reductions. The compensation offer now being made by Heathrow Ltd, primarily in relation to possible noise blight, is the most generous that we have seen to date although further evaluation will be needed to ensure the inclusion of all who will be affected.

We remain concerned about safety, both for those in the air and those on the ground, and believe that excellent safety provision must lie at the heart of any decision.

PHC  
2 Feb 15