



Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement (HENPS) factsheet

What is happening

The government is [consulting on the draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement \(HENPS\)](#). This was previously known as the [Airports National Policy Statement \(ANPS\)](#) and has been renamed to clarify that it applies only to Heathrow expansion and its associated infrastructure.

The HENPS is a planning policy document that sets out how any future planning application to expand Heathrow Airport would be assessed, including against the government's four tests.

What this is

This is a public consultation

We are [asking for views on the draft HENPS](#) before any final decision is taken. The consultation gives communities, local authorities, businesses, environmental groups and anyone else with an interest in Heathrow expansion an opportunity to comment on the draft policy before it is finalised.

This is a planning policy framework

The [draft HENPS](#) sets out the issues that any future expansion proposal would need to address, including:

- noise
- air quality
- climate and environmental impacts
- impacts on local communities

What this is not

This is not planning permission

The draft HENPS is not giving permission for a third runway to be built.

No runway can be built unless a planning application is submitted, examined and approved through the legal planning process. Planning permission represents the final decision and confirmation of expansion going ahead.

Why you may see other consultations about Heathrow expansion

You may see other consultations being carried out by organisations such as Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) or Heathrow West Limited (HWL).

These are separate from the government's consultation on the draft HENPS.

Promoters (such as HAL or HWL) may consult on their own potential expansion proposals as part of developing future planning applications.

These processes are independent and do not form part of the government's consultation on the draft HENPS.

The four tests

These are tests the government has set that expansion will be assessed against, including:

- economic growth: expansion must deliver a credible and meaningful contribution to UK-wide economic growth, supported by a clear plan for how benefits (for example, jobs, productivity and connectivity) will actually be realised
- carbon (climate): the scheme must be compatible with the UK's legally binding climate targets, including carbon budgets and net zero
- air quality: expansion must not cause new breaches of legal air quality limits taking account of appropriate mitigation
- noise: Impacts must be limited so that noise is no worse than current levels (2024 baseline), with reductions where possible, supported by effective mitigation

What happens next

Alongside the public consultation, the draft HENPS will be laid before Parliament and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny by a nominated Parliamentary Select Committee.

Government will consider all responses it receives, before issuing a formal response to the consultation and Parliamentary Select Committee Report, and may revise the draft HENPS as necessary.

Parliamentary requirements

Should the Secretary of State decide to proceed, they will then lay the draft HENPS before Parliament in accordance with the requirements set out in the Planning Act 2008.

Parliament will then decide whether to approve the draft HENPS within 21 sitting days, which will include a vote.

Once approved, the Secretary of State will decide whether to designate the HENPS, at which point it will have legal effect.

After designation

Once designated, the HENPS would then be the primary consideration for the Secretary of State and Planning Inspectorate when it makes decisions on applications for development consent for Heathrow Expansion.

There would be further opportunities for communities and stakeholders to participate during that process, including formal consultations run by those wishing to submit a planning application.

Should any interested party seek to challenge the decision to designate the HENPS, any legal challenge must be brought by way of judicial review within 6 weeks of the date of designation or the publication of the HENPS (whichever is later).