



## Heathrow Airport

On 1st July 2015, the Airports Commission announced their recommendation for a third runway at Heathrow.

In September 2013, early on in the consultation process, we responded to a discussion paper on aviation noise from the Davies Commission with a number of reservations about the way aircraft noise is measured and concerns about the impact of aviation noise on local communities. This past January we formally responded to the Commission about the airport expansion options, and in May we responded on the questions raised by a further air quality assessment it carried out. Although we need to study the details of this recommendation, there are strong indications that little regard has been given to our comments.

Previously we have recognised the importance of Heathrow to London and the Royal Borough, but opposed its expansion because of the environmental impacts and inadequate planned surface transport infrastructure. This remains the Council's position and it is allied with the 2M group of local authorities, now led by the London Borough of Hillingdon, in expressing concerns about developments at the airport, which in the past included reduced controls over night-flights and the alternating use of the two runways.

The current proposals for expansion are the largest ever put forward for Heathrow and would double the number of passengers using the airport and there would be approximately a quarter of a million new flights. We also believe that a short-term view has been taken of the demand for capacity at the airport. The report suggests that the maximum capacity of 740,000 movements per year may be reached within ten to fifteen years of the opening of any third runway, presumably prompting the airport to lobby for a fourth runway.

The Commission's own assessment that overall the noise impacts are 'significantly adverse', or still 'adverse' if noise mitigation is deployed is likely to alarm our residents, who are already experiencing disturbance, and those who may be disturbed for the first time. Crucially there is no reliable aircraft noise data available to analyse and predict the impact this third runway.

We are also concerned about the implications for air quality. The lack of priority shown by the Commission to the potential air quality impact of the extra surface transport demand generated by expansion at Heathrow, undermines the efforts of London boroughs in working towards improving the capital's air quality, particularly in view of the very real possibility of fines imposed by the EU for not meeting the nitrogen dioxide objective.

Together with other central London boroughs and boroughs in the Heathrow area, we are facing an acute air pollution situation with levels of nitrogen dioxide levels exceeding the annual average national objective, in some places by a factor of two. Typically this is where major roads intersect such as in Knightsbridge on the route of the A4 serving the airport. The entire borough is an Air Quality Management Area with approximately half of the nitrogen dioxide levels and three quarters of the particulate matter sources coming from road sources.

Not to have properly addressed impacts on human health from air pollution and noise would be a critical flaw in the Commission's deliberations and would reflect badly on the recommendation.

You can find the Davies Commissions recommendations as well as supporting material and information on past consultations at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission) [1]

To view our Davies Commissions Consultations Responses, please see the documents linked below:  
[2][RBKC Response – Discussion Paper 5 on Aviation Noise - September 2013](#) [2] [PDF] (file size 128.67 KB)  
[3][RBKC Response – Airport Expansion Options – January 2015](#) [3] [PDF] (file size 555.51 KB)  
[4][RBKC Response – Air Quality Assessment – May 2015](#) [4] [PDF] (file size 3.63 MB)  
[5][2M Response – Air Quality Assessment – May 2015](#) [5] [PDF] (file size 506.16 KB)



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- [2] [https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/RBKC\\_Davies\\_AviationNoise.pdf](https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/RBKC_Davies_AviationNoise.pdf)
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