

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 March 2018



<b>Title</b>	Update: Heathrow 3 <sup>rd</sup> Runway, Flight Path Design Consultations and the Compton Route		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	<b>To note</b>		
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<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Gething and Councillor Barnard	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Clean and Safe Environment		
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>No recommendations</b>		
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>		

## 1. Key issues

- 1.1 **Airports National Policy Statement** - In October 2016, the Government announced its preferred option to increase airport capacity in the south-east as being the creation of a north-west runway at Heathrow Airport. Before planning consent can be given for the new runway, the Government must develop and adopt an Airports National Policy Statement (NPS) setting out the need for additional airport capacity in the south-east of England and explaining why this can be delivered by a north-west runway at Heathrow.
- 1.2 The Government consulted on the NPS in February 2017, which was revised and consulted upon again in October 2017. The next step in the NPS process will be its parliamentary scrutiny through the Transport Select Committee (TSC), which comprises MPs from across the different political parties. The oral hearings are already underway with three having taken place at the time of writing. Spelthorne provided a written submission to the TSC, focusing on sustainable transport issues and the light rail scheme. If adopted, the NPS will set out the tests that must be met by any application to expand Heathrow.
- 1.3 **Development Consent Order** - Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) is responsible for obtaining the Development Consent Order (DCO) which will contain most of the consents and powers HAL needed to build and operate the third runway.
- 1.4 The preparation of the DCO application will involve two periods of public consultation before being handed over to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for consideration. PINS will carry out a period of independent examination before passing their recommendation over to the Secretary of State for Transport to make the final decision.

- 1.5 As part of the DCO process HAL is required to consult with the public and stakeholders to inform their plans, and are planning to do so in two stages:-
- S1 - HAL is currently consulting on what an expanded Heathrow Airport might look like, how it might operate and how they could mitigate the impacts. This includes options on runway length/location, terminal capacity, aircraft parking/taxi-ways, highway infrastructure, land use, and construction.
  - S2 - the second stage of consultation will present HAL's proposed DCO application, which will include preliminary environmental information on the proposed application.
- 1.6 **Airspace Design** - The introduction of a third runway at Heathrow means that consideration must be given to the location of flight paths, and how and when planes fly these. Responsibility for redesigning the flight path falls to HAL. The airspace design process is regulated and overseen by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Information on this process is given within the CAA's newly published guidance document 'Airspace Design: Guidance on the regulatory process for changing airspace design including community engagement requirements, CAP1616.
- 1.6 As part of the Airspace Design process HAL is required to consult with the public and stakeholders at various stages of the airspace design process. HAL is currently consulting on six design principals, which also includes a 6.5 hour night flight ban.
- 1.7 In designing its expansion of Heathrow HAL will need to demonstrate that they have met all requirements set out in the NPS. The draft NPS includes requirements such as:
- a) Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise
  - b) Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise;
  - c) Where possible, contribute to improvements to health and quality of life
- 1.8 An indication of the timings of these three aspects associated with the expansion of Heathrow is given in **appendix 1**.
- 1.9 **Spelthorne Borough Council's response** – An SBC officer working group has been established (Heathrow Expansion Working Group (HEWG)) to consider and respond to the content of the various consultations being forward by HAL. This group ensures a coordinated response across the various departments and areas of expertise within the Council. A councillor is soon to be appointed to Chair the HEWG group.
- 1.10 Spelthorne Council is also a member of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG) which comprises authorities most affected by the airport expansion. HAL is also a key member of the group, together with officers from the Department for Transport, Transport for London and Local Enterprise Partnerships who enjoy 'observer status'. The group's remit is to work with HAL on their proposals, providing local information and evidence and helping to shape their strategy. Through HSPG, various sub groups have been established by HAL on specific work areas associated with planning and the environment, including land use, local roads, noise, air quality, and green infrastructure, for the purpose of informing the development of HAL's plan for the expansion of Heathrow. Spelthorne officers from Strategic Planning and Environmental Health teams have attended and participated in the main HSPG meetings and the sub groups. A Leaders' Board has now been established as part of HSPG in order to give the

group greater buy-in at local level and engage the political leadership of the authorities. Most recently, HSPG gave oral evidence at the Transport Select Committee on the NPS. The work with HSPG could extend in future to developing a Joint Spatial Planning Framework in the form of a sub-regional plan to consider wider, strategic issues arising from the airport expansion such as homes, healthcare, wider employment opportunities and community infrastructure.

- 1.11 Officers of the Heathrow Expansion Working Group and councillors have attended the local Heathrow Expansion exhibitions organised by HAL and several of the Stanwell community meetings.
- 1.12 Spelthorne has acknowledged the case for a third runway at Heathrow Airport and has been supportive of expansion proposals to date, subject to appropriate consideration of and mitigation for negative impacts arising. Spelthorne has also emphasised, and continues to emphasise through its responses, that its support is dependent on securing the best possible outcome for its residents, particularly those most directly affected in the Stanwell and Stanwell Moor communities.
- 1.13 **The Compton Route** – Research by consultants has found there is an increase in air traffic using the Compton Route from 65 flights per day to 89 flights per day<sup>1</sup>. There has been an increase in the number of heavy aircraft (e.g. 747s and A340s) using the route, with many now going to ultra-long-haul destinations; so are very heavy with fuel; these planes are now lower over areas near the airport<sup>2</sup> and therefore noisier. Long haul and heavy aircraft now account for over ¾ of the total aircraft using the route.
- 1.14 There has been an increase in the proportion of flights using the northern edge of the noise preferential route (NPR<sup>3</sup>) rather than across the 3km swathe; and therefore closer to areas like Ashford. The main reason is the route involves a 180 degree turn which modern fleets find difficult to follow. Additionally, traffic departing on the route need to be tactically managed by NATS air traffic controllers to avoid the arriving aircraft from the holding stacks to the south.
- 1.15 While HAL is able to fine aircraft that do not stick to the NPR, this is not happening mainly due to the difficulty heavy and some medium aircraft having in taking the turn. HAL has reported<sup>4</sup> it will be working with NATS and members of the Heathrow Community Noise Forum to review the procedures used on the Compton route.

## **2. Timetable for implementation**

- 2.1 As indicated in **Appendix 1**

**Background papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1:-** Heathrow Expansion Outline Programme Timetable for consents and consultations

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<sup>1</sup> Between 2007 and 2015

<sup>2</sup> Approximately 200ft in the average and minimum heights

<sup>3</sup> A 3km wide corridor designed to minimise disturbance for those living near the airport

<sup>4</sup> Reported in February 2016