

Briefing Note for Item 10 - Response to Heathrow Noise Action Plan Consultation

Noise Action Plan (NAP) 2024- 2028

Environmental Health are currently consulting on Heathrow's Draft Noise Action Plan we are only at the beginning of this process.

Consultation period between 5th June to 17th July 2023

The draft NAP sets out how Heathrow are planning to manage and reduce the impacts of aircraft noise over the next 5 years. It includes draft actions that Heathrow proposes to carry out to mitigate noise. This is now the fourth plan of its kind and is part of the requirements of the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006/2238.

The plan starts by summarising the progress which Heathrow has made following the NAP 2019-2023 this includes.

- An improvement in the aircraft fleet, with the quietest Chapter 14 category representing 79.6% of total aircraft movements in 2022, up from 60,8% in 2018.
- Heathrow launched a new Fly Quiet and Green league table to incentivise airlines to use their quietest aircraft and best operational practices. This was updated at the beginning of 2023 and results are expected to be seen from the beginning of Q2.
- Heathrow have published studies on Heathrow's noise management, government policy, perceived value of the respite provided by runway alternation, and we published adherence reports on the Government's policy on its night restriction regime, Airspace Noise and ATM Performance, Summer and Noise Action Plan Contours, Steeper Climb Gradient Trial Report (DET 09R departure), and noise data for the first three years of Airbus A350 operations.
- Researched and development has been made in the detection of landing gear deployment.
- The establishment of the Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF), which replaced the Heathrow Noise Community Forum (HNCF).
- Completing the airspace change for Slightly Steeper Approaches and adopting the trial procedure as a permanent procedure for our RNP approaches in December 2021.
- A complete review of our Noise Insulation Scheme (NIS) to allow for an improved offer for local communities.
- Continued improvement of ventilation facilities at local schools, building on our window and Adobe building programmes.

The NAP only includes actions relating to developments for which the airport has been granted planning permission, or for which there are active project plans to take

forward for planning consent at the time the action plan is published. The NAP therefore does not include mitigation strategy or specific actions to deal with airport expansions. This means that the NAP only applies to the operations within the current 480 000 annual movement limit using the existing two runways. The legal requirement is for Heathrow to consider noise issues within the 55dB Lden and 50dB Lnight noise contours, These contours take into consideration aircraft noise during take-off, landing and ground roll.

The Noise Action Plan also aligns with Heathrow 2.0, their sustainability strategy which was updated in 2022 and sets out their sustainability vision and goals. That Heathrow aim to achieve by 2030. Objective 4 is called “Quieter nights, quieter flights” and contains a headline goal to “limit, and where possible reduce, the number of highly sleep-disturbed and highly annoyed people compared to 2019”. There are also a series of targets:

- Reduce noise contour areas compared to 2019
- Introduce easterly alternation by 2028
- Protected period of the core night by 2025 (no flights except dispensed operations between midnight and 4:30am)
- Incentivise the use of Chapter 14 aircraft to reduce Chapter 4 operations to less than 2019 levels.
- Increase nights without aircraft after 11:45pm relative to 2019 levels.

Key Actions outlined in the draft NAP 2024-2028

- Establishing a Fleet Forecasting Forum to predict the pace of future technology and likely take up at Heathrow.
- Reviewing the landing charges structure in order to meet our sustainable growth objectives and to accelerate the transition to a Chapter 4-free fleet
- Establishing a Technical Engagement Forum to undertake a review and renewal of the Code of Practice supporting the achievement of the noise abatement objectives.
- Developing and trialling operational practices aimed at increasing the level of predictable respite, particularly at night.
- Identifying opportunities to enhance the collection and analysis of noise data in order to improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the noise abatement interventions.
- Establishing a MoU with local authorities, providing our forecast outputs to reduce sleep disturbance at night, and supporting land use planning – we are one of the Councils they would like to include.
- Launching the new Round 4 Noise Insulation Schemes in 2024
- Seeking to introduce a voluntary ban on non-dispensed operations after midnight and before 4:30am
- Developing and implementing a ground noise management plan which will include work with international partners to develop a standard for the use of pre-conditioned air where available.
- Establishing a longitudinal noise attitudes survey, so we can enhance our understanding of our stakeholders and the effectiveness of our noise strategy.
- Strengthening the independent scrutiny of our noise management strategy and providing independent insight, assurance, and transparency
- Undertaking a review and enhancing our online information and tools to improve accessibility and provide greater insights in a more efficient way.

Our concerns with the draft NAP 2024-2029

The consultation or feedback period for the draft NAP 2024- 2029 closes on the 17 July 2023. In the following weeks we must work to understand the proposed noise Action Plan and correlate our thoughts and feed these back to Heathrow. Heathrow have provided a set list of questions relating to the plan which they would like stakeholders and residents to use/ follow. Additionally, there will be stakeholder meetings to discuss the plan and we will be working with the HSPG who will also be drafting a response.

Below are some initial thoughts on the draft NAP

1. Although not included in the NAP, Heathrow plans to proceed with the runway alterations to be able to use alternative runways during Easterlies (planes take off from the East). They have plans to re-apply for planning permission from Hillingdon Council since their planning approval recently lapsed. The use of alternative runways during Easterlies will immensely affect Stanwell Moor who could see the current number of easterly arrivals go from 36 to 328 a day. Airport is on Easterlies roughly 30% of the year. This has the potential to have a huge impact on our residents and I feel should be raised within the plan. We need to also consider the health impacts of the increased airplane noise over Stanwell Moor.
2. Night-time flights – Irrespective of any reductions to night-time noise – Spelthorne Borough Councils established position is to promote a compulsory scheduled night flight ban for a minimum period between 23.30 and 06.00 and we would like to see implementable and meaningful penalties on any infringements during this time.
3. Noise insulation Plan- Is the new plan beneficial to our residents, can more be done? We need to look at this area to see if we feel Heathrow should be doing more. Need to consider the WHO noise guidance in bedrooms. The noise insulation plan should ensure all residents can meet the WHO guidance or better.
4. The NAP also references The Noise Abatement Objectives - HSPG were critical that the Objective inexplicably only addressed night flights by freighter aircraft which is barely applicable to Heathrow and failed to require more detailed and robust justification of the economic benefit of night-time flights. HSPG were critical with the apparent shift to removing the existing absolute limit on night-time flight noise and shift to a balanced approach towards growth with clear justification.

The link below contains the full NAP draft 2024-2029 and all accompanying documents.

<https://www.heathrow.com/company/about-heathrow/consultation/heathrow-noise-action-plan-consultation/About-the-Noise-Action-Plan-2023-2028>

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