

Cabinet

11 May 2017



Title	Government Consultation on Draft Airports National Policy Statement		
Purpose of the report	To make a decision		
Report Author	John Brooks		
Cabinet Member	Councillor Colin Barnard	Confidential	No
Corporate Priority	Economic Development		
Recommendations	Cabinet is recommended to : a. Agree the response at Appendix 1 to the Draft Airports National Policy Statement. b. In response to the UK Airspace Policy document to support the proposed formation of an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise		
Reason for Recommendation	The Council supports the expansion of Heathrow subject to noise, air quality and transport issues being resolved. It is therefore important to respond to these consultation documents as they will influence the way in which detailed proposals for expansion are assessed.		

1. Key issues

- 1.1 The government is consulting on the above two documents as part of a 16 week public consultation. Two exhibition events have been held locally; at Stanwell Moor Village Hall (Tuesday 28 February) and in Egham (Monday 20 February at which detailed information on both documents was available. The consultation period closes 25 May 2017.
- 1.2 The purpose of the **Draft National Aviation Policy Statement** is to provide the basis against which a formal proposal for the provision of a new Northwest runway at Heathrow would be assessed. This follows on from the positive recommendation of the Airports Commission (July 2015) and the further work undertaken by the government particularly on issues such as noise and air quality. The government confirmed on 25 October 2016 that the Northwest option was its preferred scheme.
- 1.3 The document does not therefore set out a draft proposal for a new runway with necessary supporting detail but rather it sets out the criteria against which such a proposal will be assessed. Any detailed proposal will be for the

airport operator to submit under a Development Consent Order process which is a specific way in which major infrastructure projects are now considered.

- 1.4 In progressing to this stage the government has accepted the case for expansion at Heathrow with a Northwest runway option over the other two options which were a second runway at Gatwick and an extended northern runway at Heathrow.
- 1.5 This Council supports the expansion of Heathrow and the Northwest Runway option because of its economic benefits but the support is conditional on the noise, air quality and transport issues being satisfactorily resolved.
- 1.6 The Council is working with Heathrow and authorities adjoining and near the airport on Heathrow related issues through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG). The joint working through this group is an important way in which technical issues can be jointly explored and consensus developed where possible.
- 1.7 The government's consultation seeks views on 9 questions and the proposed response to these is set out at **Appendix 1**. The responses have been informed by Spelthorne's own position and concerns as well as matters being considered jointly with the HSPG.
- 1.8 The **UK Airspace Policy** document is essentially about formalising/improving the processes of managing and deciding on changes to aircraft routes and airspace management to achieve appropriate safety and noise minimisation. It does not set out aircraft routes itself. The way airspace issues are managed has changed little over the past 50 years.
- 1.9 The purpose is to achieve airspace 'modernisation' in particular to use the latest technologies, make airspace more efficient, and reduce the need for stacking, making journeys faster and more environmentally friendly.
- 1.10 The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has responsibility for airspace management in the UK and reports to the Department for Transport.
- 1.11 As part of the consultation the government has announced its intention to establish an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise and for the Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport to have 'call-in' powers over CAA decisions in the same way as the SoS for Department for Communities and Local Government has such powers in planning.
- 1.12 Further information is set out in the consultation document and the summary for which links are provided in the 'background documents' section of this report.
- 1.13 The consultation sets out proposals to achieve the following benefits:
 - (a) Greater clarity and transparency in decision making and the way noise is managed;
 - (b) Improvements in the evidence used to inform how airspace decisions are made, particularly the noise impacts;
 - (c) Greater focus on industry and communities working together to find ways to manage noise which work best for local circumstances;
 - (d) Clarity and consistency in who makes airspace decisions, and why;
 - (e) Greater certainty for industry that the airspace change framework provides what they need to deliver beneficial change; and

- (f) Ambitious noise management outside of airspace change, taking advantage of the latest technological developments.

1.14 There is a particular need to review airspace policy to ensure greater airspace capacity is provided to meet airport expansion at Heathrow and also to make airspace decision making more transparent. Much of the material is about processes but the key public issue is the intention to create an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise.

1.15 In respect of this document, other than supporting the setting up of the Independent Commission, there are no other matters requiring comment so far as this Borough is concerned.

2. Options analysis and proposal

2.1 Both documents deal with important matters. There is a need for a National Aviation Policy Statement to provide a basis against which the assessment of and final decision on a detailed proposal for a new runway at Heathrow can be made. It is also appropriate that, as an authority which adjoins the airport, Spelthorne takes the opportunity to respond. The draft responses set out in **Appendix 1** are considered the most appropriate. The only other option is to not respond but this would not be in resident's interest.

2.2 The Airspace Policy document sets out appropriate and pragmatic improvements over current arrangements and are essential to match the government's plans for airport expansion.

3. Financial implications

3.1 There are none relating to the two documents for Spelthorne.

4. Other considerations

4.1 There are none.

5. Timetable for implementation

5.1 A response is required by 25 May 2017.

Background papers:

There are none.

Consultation documents:

1. Consultation on Draft Airports National Policy Statement
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/heathrow-expansion-draft-airports-national-policy-statement>
2. Draft National Policy Statement
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/588767/draft-airports-nps-print-version.PDF
3. UK Airspace Policy Consultation
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-policy-on-the-design-and-use-of-uk-airspace>
4. Summary of Airspace consultation document (exhibition boards)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/593016/uk-airspace-policy-consultation-introduction.pdf
5. Response of Heathrow Strategic Planning Group 30 March 2017

Appendices:

1. Response to Draft Airports National Policy Statement