

Have Your Say on Heathrow Expansion

Carl Pierce, of Hounslow Liberal Democrats chaired the meeting held on 9th July at St Paul's church with speakers (from R-L):

Peter Willan, Richmond Heathrow Campaign. PW
Nigel Milton, Director of Policy and Political Relations at Heathrow Airport, NM
John Stewart of HACAN, (Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise), JS
Liberal Democrat GLA Assembly Member (also leader of opposition in Richmond), Stephen Knight, SK
Lib Dem transport minister Norman Baker, M.P., NB
British Airways were invited but declined

Each gave a brief presentation:

Peter Willan

Organisation includes Richmond Society, Kew Society, Friends of Richmond Green, over 2000 members. Over last 2 years have done a lot of research and campaigning see www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org
Met with many organisations in airport industry.
Seeking to reduce noise levels over Richmond.
Putting together proposal that provides for expansion of London 5 without an extra runway that will be submitted next week.
DfT forecast shows by 2050 shortage of capacity of 1 runway or 35 million passengers, and 1 runway of spillage i.e. passengers who spill over into neighbouring regions to get flights.
Looked at capacity and demand. Think found 1 runway on capacity and 2 on demand.
On capacity side, looked at DfT forecast for passenger loads, think they've underestimated load factors, think with A380 and other large aircraft can increase load factors.
On demand side looked at international transfers, 1/3 Heathrow is transit passengers, most of which are international. Very little income to UK economy. Most of this is at Heathrow. Exempt from Air Passenger Duty. Demand should be replaced by local demand. Fairer tax on aviation is needed.
This all provides 3 runways so no need for expansions before 2050. Low cost solution
In favour of dispersal model or airport rather than hub models.
Do not think any runs will lose viability.
Transfers are not the answer to the problem. Diminishing returns of frequent flights to single destinations
Looked at different models for redistribution of passengers
Maybe airports could segment market - each airport concentrates on particular world region. Heathrow could expand from 70 to 100 million passengers.
Researched daytime and think enough capacity to take in all night flights. Total ban from 11-7 night time.

Nigel Milton

Heathrow must get quieter.
Main way to do this will be with new technologies and quieter planes but that's not enough.
Lots of spare aviation capacity. Birmingham and Manchester are 50% full. Heathrow capped by planning agreement at 480000 plane movements a year. 485000 plane movements scheduled a year on the basis of some cancellations. Why not shift to other airports, London or elsewhere? Distinction between airport capacity and hub airport capacity. Heathrow is London's only hub. Enables airlines to fly viably, allows combines local demand and transfer to fill up large planes to fly to long haul destinations. 75% of UK long haul are Heathrow.
Huge advantage to UK to be home to a mega-hub like Heathrow.

Government have three options:

- 1) say too difficult to expand Heathrow. Then some will move to other London airports, some will move abroad, Heathrow will decline, Paris etc. grows, therefore UK doesn't have connectivity to emerging markets, loses direct connections which generate trade which generate growth). Next year for first time Heathrow will no longer be busiest international airport. In the coming years Dubai, Frankfurt and Paris will overtake us. Will affect our economic growth.
- 2) expand current hub - heavy impact on West London and surrounds.
- 3) building hub elsewhere – Heathrow has 76,000 employees, and 100,000 employed around airport, cost of new airport and transport connections, number of places you can fly to from Heathrow is declining. Other airports are growing. Staying still in modern world means you are declining. Government talks about global race. Heathrow is a key part of being competitive.

"One hub or none" document presenting these three options.

Last month issued docs "Heathrow best place for Britain" looking at role Heathrow plays in West London, responding to Boris airport and argues against moving airport from West to East

other doc on economics of Heathrow's future and how to make it quieter.

Slight concern for air pollution but most complaints are about noise.

Next week will be submitting plans to Airport Commission.

There is a trade-off between social and economic costs and that's a political decision.

Growth at all costs is no longer acceptable.

John Stewart

Heathrow are no longer proposing mixed mode so runway alternation will continue.

Consultation about night flights in two parts. The first part was technical and has happened, the second in autumn to public. Current regime runs out in Oct 2014 so new agreement needed. Would be surprised by any dramatic increase in night flights. 16 flights allowed between 11pm-6am; 62 between 6 and 7am. Arguing for no night flights before 6am. Produced economic report on night flights to answer Heathrow saying they needed night flights. Night flights brought some economic benefits but dramatically outweighed by costs: poorer health, lack of productivity and knock on costs. Numbers count when it comes to consultation.

Third runway was thought to be off agenda but back on. Airports Commission will be looking at it.

Interim report in December from Davies Commission which will shortlist proposals. Final report published in Summer 2015. According to EU 725,000 people live under Heathrow flight paths, representing 28% of all people adversely affected by aircraft noise right across Europe. Heathrow will try and reduce impact of noise but can't do that much.

Importance of hub - London is the hub rather than Heathrow being the hub. More terminating passengers in London than to any other city in the world. People are coming to London regardless of the size of Heathrow. Don't mind which airport they arrive on. If London is the attraction than Heathrow's size is not the issue. 20-25% of Heathrow trips are domestic flights or to near Europe. There will always be some of these, by virtue of interchange. A number of these would go by rail if rail was better and cheaper. Norman Baker has been fighting hard for a sane transport policy. Eliminate some of these short haul flights. Don't believe in economic case for Heathrow,.

Stephen Knight

Each expansion is always the last expansion.

London Assembly (GLA) mostly agrees that expanding Heathrow is not the right solution. Mayor pretty much agrees. Most notably for environmental impact, particularly noise. Case for banning night flights. Localised issues re air and noise pollution. Most of air pollution is not from Heathrow, but significant amounts in travelling to and from Heathrow so related. Climate change is the significant long term impact. Need to cut carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. No alternative to aircraft fuel, but by 2050 will

have given up road fuel or gas heating. Flying accounts for 25% of emissions. Need to limit growth. Either need carbon pricing or capping airport capacity.

In low carbon economy need high speed rail to join people to airport to minimise short haul flights. How to design aircraft system for future that is lower carbon. Need to shift people off air. Not unanimity in GLA about answer. Don't think Boris Island solves carbon issues. Heathrow employs in/directly 500,000 and closing it down, replacing with an airport elsewhere will see collapse of economy in West London. Cannot underestimate economic impact of shutting down Heathrow.

Norman Baker

From Lib Dem point of view, at last election opposed any growth in London, South East, because there was capacity, because of the environmental impact, and the need to reduce carbon emissions. Department of Transport has to create growth and cut carbon. Can electrify trains, can't electrify planes. Limit to what you can do with existing technology to planes. Limit to alternative fuels possible, so limit aviation until it can grow sustainably. Assumption by climate committee that aviation will not cut carbon, everyone else will.

There is still some capacity for removing some short haul from Heathrow. HS2 has capacity to shift people from air to rail. 3/4 of London to Manchester are now on rail after rail line upgrade. Deutschebahn now have permission to use Euro tunnel (with negotiations on-going about pricing of track access).

Government position: original position was that Heathrow should not be expanded. Labour also agrees. Davies commission set up. Need cross-party consensus for these long term investments so they continue through changes in government. Need a wide short list of proposals.

When HS2 is in place, Birmingham airport will be 38 minutes from centre of London. Less time than it takes on tube to Heathrow from central island. Boris island is an odd proposal.. number of serious objections to it as well. SSMontgomery under proposed location with 980 tonnes of explosive.

Q&A

Q: economic impact if Heathrow is limited?

NM: decision of companies as to location, will go elsewhere, businesses are silent on need for Heathrow. Statements in doc from Microsoft/Blackberry who are deciding where their Europe HQ will be, will go elsewhere if can't have direct access to destinations. Chinese companies locating round Paris. US/Japanese in 90s set up around WL, Surrey.

Q: Family arriving from Heathrow to get to Birmingham will have long journey with many changes, length of time to actually built, why not build it to Heathrow?

NB: Sensible public planning. Harder to do it fast, France has different planning procedure and more space. Phase 1 is London to Birmingham. which will have trains exclusively London to Birmingham and slower trains that go beyond as well. Spur is proposed from Heathrow. This could be extended onto Gatwick as well.

Q: look at bus replacement service when tube closed for maintenance at weekend; what economic pressures coming from Tories?

NB: Spur to Heathrow should be done as fast as possible, but cost issue. Spending lots on expanding/improving rail. Rail too successful and a victim of own success. Passengers going up.

Government has bought into transport investment leading to growth.

SK: investment into HS2/Crossrail take time. New airport would take even longer to develop. Could check

in baggage at Manchester and collect it from final destination.

NM: do see high speed rail as fundamental to future of airports, agree with replacing air journeys with rail.

Q: Need combined rail and air, would be a shame to lose international business; given it's likely for expansion at Heathrow, what are plans to alleviate noise under flight path, where are all these letters about the next round of double glazing ?

NM: Heathrow can't grow unless noise is reduced. Moving landing point so planes are higher when coming in over populated areas. Noise Insulation scheme being piloted. At moment there is uncertainty about Heathrow and shareholders don't want to invest in Noise Insulation if future uncertain.

JS: question the assumption that business in London will suffer if Heathrow doesn't expand. Not necessarily true, how important is Heathrow to businesses in London. For last 20 years, London has been voted top city in Europe for business so maybe economy won't suffer.

Q: Solar plane had flown across USA, how long before can carry more; back in 90s T5 enquiry health reports were negative; 20 years ago, LBH looked at health impacts on borough; can we have a health impact assessment that is comprehensive that considers deaths, respiratory problems, increased stress etc.

NB: would be included under environmental impact assessment. Not expert.

Q: Short term impact like noise pollution, but longer problems such as air pollution, climate change. Don't hear anything that connects short term and long term solutions.

JS: last time opposed expansion using people concerned about short and long term impacts, building coalition of local residents and Greenpeace, Plane Stupid.

Handout by Michael Deans of scienceuncoiled.co.uk: suggests that acid air pollution is caused by aviation and is related to dementia; Savings to NHS would pay for shortfall.

JS: EU directive on air pollution. Pockets around Heathrow breach these already. Not all of it comes from aircraft, but some from traffic to airport.

SK: current research into impact of air pollution and how understanding of dangers are growing, and impact of disturbed sleep.