

County Council Meeting – 17 July 2012

**STATEMENT BY MEMBERS**

The recent proposal that a third and fourth runway should be built at Heathrow leaves my head spinning at the absurdity of it.

- 1) Heathrow is clearly a huge economic powerhouse, but stand back and it already skews the local economy. Investing more eggs into this one basket, does not make long term economic sense. In the current climate especially, we should be looking to expand and diversify our economic base. Yet this throttles and constricts it. Mono economies are always vulnerable and certainly never sustainable.
- 2) It does not make sense to argue that Heathrow HAS to expand. Does anyone think the 60m passengers it currently handles are going to magically go elsewhere? Of course not.
- 3) Surrey is experiencing chronic pressure to rapidly expand its domestic house building. Yet the scheme proposes knocking down literally thousands of homes. The ripple effect of this will cause major problems across Surrey and beyond. Would someone please tell me:
  - Firstly where are those made homeless will be re-housed?
  - Secondly where is all the extra housing for the extra workforce going to be built, and who is going to pay?
  - Thirdly what this does to our own people already facing acute housing problems? In short this proposal advocates cutting supply and increasing demand on an already stressed resource. A double whammy of complete insanity.
- 4) There is a reason why Spelthorne is the only Authority in the Surrey which is totally an AQMA- (Air Quality Management Area). Our Air is lousy. The airport plays a role in this both directly from aviation itself and from the over reliance of cars to access the airport. There are numerous examples to show that the transport infra structure cannot cope NOW let alone with any further increase in loadings.
- 5) The proposal makes sweeping and unsafe assumptions that the pattern of aviation will not change. Increasingly point to point travel is being preferred over the older hub model this is based on. Here we have a huge gamble on a no change scenario in an extremely volatile environment. This is simply not safe. We are as likely to end up with a white elephant as anything else- and a vastly expensive and hugely destructive White Elephant at that.
- 6) The Environmental cost is unacceptable. The contempt this shows for Green Belt beggars belief. The concept itself is under attack here. I believe that Green belt is hugely important and must be defended. I do not (as the proposers of this scheme clearly believe) consider Green Belt an expendable token in the get rich scam to benefit a few people. In essence this is best it can amount to. At all levels this scheme fails. From the destruction of 3 communities, the increased pressure on housing, the threat to a world recognised RAMSAR site, down the casual extinction of a local football club it is unacceptable.

- 7) In Summary what we have here is a smash and grab raid on the future. It is a blinkered view; short term expediency over long term need. Something for a New Labour apparatchik to be proud of but for all normal sane people to be utterly horrified with.

**Ian Beardsmore**  
**Local Member for Sunbury Common and Ashford Common**  
**17 July 2012**