

REVISED RECOMMENDATION
BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

EXECUTIVE
26 February 2008

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS TO EXPAND HEATHROW AIRPORT

Proposed response to the Government

While recognising and welcoming that Heathrow airport makes a considerable contribution to the national and regional economy and consequently that further investment to maintain its pre-eminent position amongst UK airports should be accepted in principle, Surrey County Council cannot support any further expansion of Heathrow Airport on the basis of the proposals set out by the Government in its consultation document.

The Council notes with some regret that the proposals in the consultation paper are so gravely flawed that they irretrievably undermine the arguments for the economic benefits that they could bring.

At the heart of the Council's opposition to the proposals is its firm belief that measures to mitigate the environmental shortcomings of any expansion (for example greatly improved surface access, notably Airtrack, improvements in air quality, reductions in perceived noise pollution) must be in place *before* the proposals come into effect.

In essence, the proposals fail because they are based on:

- (a) excluding aviation from the targets for reducing greenhouse gases and emissions
- (b) assuming that as yet unproven new technology will meet air quality targets
- (c) making no allowance for recent research regarding people's increased sensitivity to noise
- (d) making no proposals for increased capacity or managing demand to cope with the forecast doubling of road traffic on what is already the busiest part of the entire UK road network
- (e) making only outline proposals for public transport to cope with the forecast doubling in public transport use, with no guarantee that such schemes would be funded and operational in time
- (f) relying on the operator to come forward with proposals for transport, despite the fact that Heathrow clearly is one of *the* national projects for which the Government would take responsibility for under the Planning Bill
- (g) making no commitments on increased security arrangements, emergency planning implications, and business continuity requirements, both within the airport, and for the surrounding area
- (h) not properly addressing the blight, disruption and distress to the community, businesses and individuals, and their relocation and housing, caused by the third runway and sixth terminal.

The Council has supported the need for further investment in Heathrow, but the immediate need is for investment to improve the quality of the Airport, not the quantity of flights.

The Council is therefore only willing to consider the further expansion of Heathrow on the basis that:

- (a) improvements to the existing facilities are in place
- (b) substantial investment in local and regional access, and the provision of major rail investment, including Airtrack, and the extension of Crossrail linking the airport with the Midlands, the West and the South, in addition to London, being completed before *any* expansion in use of the airport (through mixed mode as well as through a third runway) takes place
- (c) environmental constraints, particularly concerning the noise contour cap and EU air quality targets are not breached or circumvented, and that these rely on proven rather than desired technological improvements
- (d) security, emergency planning and business continuity arrangements are properly addressed
- (e) the interests of the people affected are properly and sympathetically addressed
- (f) the Government takes responsibility for ensuring all these conditions are met (including committing the necessary funding), rather than relying on the operator

A detailed response (as set out in paragraphs 11 to 24, and Annexe 1, plus Annexe 2 on the Council's earlier responses) is attached.

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Executive Member for Transport

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Executive Member for Environment

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