

SUBJECT:	Response to the Consultation on Revised Draft Airports National Policy Statement
REPORT OF:	Leader Cllr. Nick Naylor /Cllr John Read Portfolio Holder
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1. Purpose of Report

The government has published a revised draft Airports National Policy Statement. This report examines the changes and proposes issues to be included in the response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet delegates the response on this consultation to the Director Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder;

2. Content of Report

Earlier this year the Government published a Draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for consultation together with a separate consultation on reforming UK airspace policy. The consultation document was supported by numerous background documents. This consultation closed on 25th May. The response of South Bucks District Council is [here](#). The 70,000 consultations responses have now being analysed and changes are proposed. In addition since the previous consultation the government has updated its passenger demand forecasts and published the 2017 Air Quality Plan. The revised NPS is currently out to consultation (since 24th October) which will close on 19th December 2017. The revised NPS will be debated by Parliament in the spring and it is anticipated that the final decision will be taken in late spring.

Once the NPS is approved as government policy this will form the planning policy for the Development Consent Order (effectively the planning application) which will be submitted by Heathrow Airport Ltd directly to the Planning Inspectorate and the examination that follows will be restricted to only assessing the extent the proposals meet the NPS. It is likely that the DCO will be submitted in 2019.

In addition Heathrow Airport Ltd will be going out to consultation on their initial scheme proposals early in the New Year.

3. Consultation document

The main changes to the NPS are as follows:

- Changes resulting from analysis of the 2017 Air Quality Plan and the updates to the passenger demand forecasts
- Changes as a result of either a change in government policy since the previous consultation document or following consideration of the responses submitted as part of the previous consultation
- Drafting changes in order to clarify intention.

The changes made to chapter 5 are made to reflect the updated position to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide as quickly as possible.

The updates to passenger forecasts show that nationally aviation demand is expected to be higher than previously forecast for the years up to 2030. Much of this additional demand is concentrated in London and the South East. Without expansion London airports would be even more constrained than previously forecast, operating at full capacity by the mid-2030's.

Greater demand for short haul trips to Western Europe has increased the passenger numbers forecast for Gatwick. Higher demand also means an expanded Heathrow will fill up sooner than previously forecast. However, the rationale for Heathrow North West Runway is that :

- Greater international connectivity delivered by Heathrow
- Greater passenger benefits
- Greater wider economic impacts in terms of a boost to air freight and trade
- Geographic location, freight capability and domestic connectivity

The overall conclusions of the Appraisal of Sustainability show that (provided any scheme remains within the parameters and boundaries in this policy), whilst there will be inevitable harm caused by a new Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport in relation to some topics, the need for such a scheme, the obligation to mitigate such harm as far as possible, and the benefits that such a scheme will deliver, outweigh such harm. However, this is subject to the assessment of the effects of the preferred scheme, identification of suitable mitigation, and measures to secure and deliver the relevant mitigation.

The Government expects any applicant to carry out a further and more detailed study, and to secure appropriate mitigation measures, ahead of seeking development consent.

4. Impacts on South Bucks

The main impacts of airport expansion identified that we continue to work with Heathrow Airport Ltd on are:

- Noise
- Air quality
- Community impacts
- Land take
- Off Airport parking pressures
- Additional traffic generation and by implication air quality impacts on Burnham Beeches SAC (identified as an impact in the AofS)
- Surface access including Western Rail to Heathrow and need for improved public transport from the District to Heathrow
- Construction impacts including construction camps and the need for temporary accommodation for workers
- Burnham Beeches and the Habitat Regulations

In terms of this consultation however the main response will be on air quality issues in terms of our existing and proposed AQMAs and particularly in relation to Burnham Beeches. The Appraisal of Sustainability Habit Regulations Assessment states for Burnham Beeches that

Likely Significant Effects could not be discounted in the HRSA as a result of the scheme's surface access. Sections of the SAC are located within approximately 200 m of the A355, which may experience greater traffic flows as a result of the scheme. The SAC is identified as vulnerable to nitrogen deposition with levels currently exceeding the site-relevant critical load.

5. Corporate Implications

Reports must include specific comments addressing the following implications;

3.1 *Financial - none*

3.2 *Legal - none*

3.3 *Sustainability - some benefits for public transport users.*

6. Links to Council Policy Objectives

The Councils will continue to use the objective of striving to conserve the environment and promote sustainability in their negotiations with the airport.

7. Next Step

N/A

Background Papers:	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654126/revised-draft-airports-nps-print-version.pdf
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