

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<i>Heathrow Airport Expansion - Consultation</i>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<i>Cllr John Read</i>
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<i>Steve Bambrick</i>
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<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<i>All</i>

### 1. Purpose of Report

Heathrow are holding a consultation between 17<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018. This report sets out the main issues. Due to the timing of the consultation the response will be agreed as per the recommendation below.

### RECOMMENDATION

**To note the proposed response to Heathrow's Airport Expansion to be agreed by the Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Planning and Economic Development.**

### 2. Reasons for Recommendations

Due to the timing of the consultation the response will need to be sent out before this report is considered by Cabinet.

### 3. Content of Report

- 3.1 Members will be aware that in October 2016 the Government announced that a new North West runway at Heathrow is its preferred scheme for the expansion of airport capacity in the South East. Since then Heathrow has been developing proposals for how the expanded airport might look, how it might operate, and proposals for compensation and mitigation. The two consultations in 2017 were for the National Policy Statement which once approved (late Spring 2018) will form the equivalent of outline planning permission for the scheme.
- 3.2 The current consultation lasts until March 28<sup>th</sup> and has involved leafletting 2 million people and holding 40 public exhibitions. Two of which were in South Bucks. This consultation is non-statutory and is the equivalent of issues and options stage of a Local Plan. The formal consultation of the proposed development to be considered as part of the Development Consent Order process will be in early 2019. The consultation is supported by numerous background documents on different topic areas. Some information is locationally specific and other information is more general. Some of the early work has been shared with the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group but not all. We have put a disclaimer on the Council's website to indicate that we do not necessarily endorse all the options or proposals.
- 3.3 In addition there is a separate consultation on airspace changes. This relates to potential principles that could be applied when designing the new airspace required for an expanded airport. They are not consulting at this stage on flight path options. Issues such as lengthening night flight bans from 5 hours to 6 and a half hours, runway alternation, using quieter aircraft, particularly in the early morning, keeping planes coming into land higher for longer and ending

stacking are all sensible proposals. However the consultation questions are clumsily phrased such as should aircraft be routed over urban areas or rural areas? As the majority of respondents will live in urban areas this significantly disadvantages more rural areas such as Chiltern and South Bucks.

#### **4. Our response**

4.1 A number of locations within South Bucks are directly affected by the proposals. These are covered in detail below. More general responses are also made particularly on transport issues, noise and air quality.

4.2 Specific land uses (all Green Belt sites) proposed within the District are;

- a) Borrow pit to be used during construction off Old Slade Lane. Borrow pits are where sand and gravel is locally extracted near to the construction project and subsequently either backfilled and restored using again locally generated spoil from the project or allowed to flood to contribute to flood storage. Despite this borrow pits still have the potential to generate HGV traffic together with dust and noise impacts to local residents. The borrow pit is adjacent to a bridge across the M4, however this bridge is proposed to be demolished as part of M4 Smart Motorway proposals and although it will be replaced the timing of this is uncertain. The bridge is also only suitable for light traffic and is primarily used as a footpath and bridleway. Heathrow have suggested a conveyor system to reach the main construction sites on the south side of the M4 (within Slough). There are no specific issues related to this for our Local Plan although if HGV traffic is generated then this along with all other HGV traffic issues could affect the timing for some Local Plan proposals.
- b) Thorney Mill rail sidings and the adjacent site are identified as the only site suitable for airport related development. The rail sidings was previously used as a rail connected aggregates depot but is currently vacant, the adjacent site is used for a number of unauthorised uses including airport parking. The sites are previously developed sites within the Green Belt. The alternative proposals include consideration for aggregates depot or an oil storage facility both of which would need a rail connection. Although it is recognised that the latter is some distance from the airport. Given this context it is suggested that our emerging Local Plan does not seek to propose anything for this site and to consider this when determining our Councils' response to the emerging Bucks Minerals and Waste Local Plan in due course when considering the rail sidings..
- c) Flood storage – a number of sites are identified within the District as part of the flood mitigation proposals upstream of the airport. The Colne and the Colne Brook are directly affected by the airport expansion and both watercourses will need considerable diversion including the Colne potentially passing for 800m in a tunnel under the airport and the Colne Brook being diverted around the western edge of the new runway. The new runway will be built in the flood plain and to slow up the water flow before it reaches the airport boundary there are several locations identified to hold the water upstream in the event of a flood. These locations include the field in the NW quadrant of the M25/M4 junction (south of the Poynings),, Thorney Golf Course land, land north of Iver Lane, land parallel to Bangors Road, and New Denham Quarry (recently identified for a relocated Hillingdon Outdoor Adventure Centre - HOAC). It is not envisaged that all of them are required but some of them are not suitable particularly those affecting residential properties (part of the Golf Club site) or HOAC. Of course the creation of flood storage

will also generate HGV movements in removing soil etc. Some of the sites identified are also contaminated former landfill sites. This therefore is of concern without adequate safeguards. SUDs will be used within the airport boundary to compensate for additional hardstanding. This will be in addition to current methods of reed beds and water storage (with pollution filters).

- d) In addition sites will be needed for biodiversity offsetting. As the Colne Valley Regional Park is heavily impacted by the expansion proposals particularly where the new runway is proposed, narrowing the gap between the airport and Slough/Colnbrook significantly, there needs to be compensatory land identified. South Bucks (as the largest District affected) is supporting the Colne Valley Regional Park in its discussions and negotiations with the Airport. Potential biodiversity off-setting locations could conflict with part of the Northern Extension of Slough. If views are accepted about needing to protect the integrity of the Park after Heathrow expansion then Slough's proposed expansion area could be reduced.

4.3 The noise envelope has yet to be identified but general concerns persist with regard to noise (primarily ground noise and traffic noise rather than aircraft noise at this stage) and air quality, including within the proposed new AQMA in Iver and affecting Burnham Beeches SAC. Air quality has to meet new government standards and thresholds to be met are likely to be included in the NPS. It should be noted that air quality is primarily a traffic issue from motorways and HGV traffic, within the District rather than an aircraft issue.

4.4 The new runway will pass over the realigned M25 (south of the M4) at a height, there is potential concern here for noise and visual intrusion visible from the south of the District..

4.5 One of the biggest concerns for the District is the cumulative impact from the various projects proposed in the Iver area for which we still do not have confirmed timetables for construction. These are the permitted M4 Smart motorway, and HEX depot for HS2, the proposed Western Rail Link to Heathrow and M25 Smart motorways and possible motorway service area. Heathrow will have to take account of the cumulative impact of committed schemes within their DCO.

4.6 Transport issues identified in ongoing discussions include:

- From South Bucks new easily deliverable walking and cycling (both commuter and leisure trails) and new bus routes (particularly from Iver) will be important additions to new train services including Crossrail (from December 2019) and new Chiltern services to Old Oak Common ( not before 2026) as well as Western Rail Access services when they arrive.
- New Chiltern services (from Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross and Denham) to Old Oak Common (for onward connections to Heathrow) and additional bus and coach services will also provide for those who do not have easy access to a Crossrail station.
- Charging on access roads to Heathrow and pricing of new car parks will need to be carefully thought out to not deliver unintended consequences in terms of exacerbating the illegal/unauthorised car parking issues in South Bucks and encouraging drivers to seek alternative and perhaps more unsuitable route options.
- Western Rail Access needs to be delivered as a priority as the business case considered this scheme necessary was based on a 2 runway airport. Further delays to the scheme caused by the need to dovetail around HS2's HEX depot (if it proceeds) are unacceptable.

- Southern Rail Access should be delivered within a specified time span. DfT and NR need to make a decision as to which route(s) are supported. Currently there are 7 different schemes.
- Extending the Ultra Low Emissions Zone to the area around the airport, including preferably the Motorways, will assist in improving air quality for local residents.
- The issues facing access to the airport from London should not disadvantage new and improved access from the Home Counties.
- Behaviour change programmes are essential and should be delivered as soon as possible and should not be reliant on airport expansion.
- Crossrail - travel impacts – will more people park at Iver (and Taplow) to get to Heathrow on Crossrail? Parking charges daily, weekly etc might need addressing along with additional on-street parking controls to curb excessive commuter and parking.
- Airlines different pattern of public transport usage according to origin – Europe (passengers who use public transport as a matter of course) versus Middle East (who tend not to use public transport). More incentives needed to encourage public transport use by all passengers.
- Staff – recruitment policy – policy is focussed on areas with good access to the airport; parking restraints; employment travel survey results from 2017 – currently being analysed.
- Airport Car parks how many new spaces – will these be enough? Locations? Priority should be given to short stay, colleagues, long stay – in that order. Pricing differentials are important.
- Unintended consequences – offsite car parks affect Heathrow car parking income which is recycled into sustainable transport.
- Taxi use needs to be managed to make it efficient and discourage empty journeys – licensing rules are changes necessary?
- High occupancy vehicles lanes on access roads and motorways? Encourage increased coaches but they could just get stuck in traffic unless bus lanes?
- Freight –truck parks need to be carefully addressed and located. All trucks should be Euro 6. Location of hub freight facilities close to airport but with easy access to motorway network. Most of the freight facilities will be based to the south of the airport. **South Bucks will not encourage freight facilities to be located within the District in order to reduce HGV traffic.**
- Construction traffic impacts. Construction routes will need to be agreed with LPAs.
- Quality of life fund – local residents may suffer noise, AQ, construction impacts etc. Compensation payments could be made to local good causes or communities could benefit from cheaper public transport. Schipol have achieved beneficial solutions to these issues.
- Traffic Modelling needs to be agreed and mitigation/compensation needs to be offered to communities affected by an increase in traffic and or contributions to highway improvements and the Iver Relief Road..

5.5 Airspace principals are a separate consultation. This is the first of several consultations on the topic. Flight path options will be in Consultation 3. These principals set out options for Flight Paths principle 1, Urban and Rural areas Principle 2, Urban areas Principle 3, Noise and Emissions Principle 4, Technology and Innovation Principle 5 and Night flights Principle 6. The Council in its response will welcome the longer night flight ban but express concern regarding the urban rural question. Our preferred scenario is an even approach so rural areas and their tranquillity are not disadvantaged.

## 5. Consultation

*Not Applicable*

**6. Options (if any)**

*Not relevant.*

**7. Corporate Implications**

*Reports must include specific comments addressing the following implications;*

*7.1 Financial – The Council is working with the Heathrow Strategic Planning group and officers time is reclaimed as part of the agreement.*

*7.2 Legal – No implications at this stage but will be relevant as the Development Consent Order progresses and the need for a Statement of Common ground develops.*

*7.2 Environmental Issues, , Social Inclusion, Sustainability are key issues raised in our response.*

**8. Links to Council Policy Objectives**

This should be a brief statement identifying the elements of the Community or Corporate Plan the report aims to advance and which specific Council policies it may address or relate to.

Key Objectives available here:

Sustainable Environment - protecting our heritage, protecting our future

**9. Next Step**

*The Council will continue to work with Heathrow to ensure that the impacts of the expansion either benefit our communities or at the least mitigated and compensated for.*

<b>Background Papers:</b>	None other than those referred to in the report.
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