

HACAN Briefing

Consultations At-A-Glance

The Department of Transport (DfT) has put out three documents for public consultation: Night Flights Consultation, the National Policy Statement (NPS) - a consultation on a Heathrow third runway; Airspace Policy Consultation. The Night Flights Consultation is the most urgent with a closing date of 28th February. The closing date for the others is 25th May.

HACAN has produced more detailed briefings on each consultation – available on our website. This briefing is aimed at those of you who wish to write short responses.

Night Flights Consultation

The consultation is proposing the existing night flight regime continues for 5 years from October this year until 2022. 16 scheduled flights are allowed between 11.30pm and 6am. HACAN is arguing for at least a 7 hour night ban from 11pm until 6am. The average adult is asleep for 7 hours each night.

The consultation document can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/582863/night-flight-restrictions-at-heathrow-gatwick-and-stansted.pdf; **Responses** should be emailed to night.flights@dft.gsi.gov.uk by 28th February.

National Policy Statement Consultation

The DfT is consulting on the need for a third runway; its local impacts and what conditions Heathrow will be required to meet should it be given permission to build it. If Parliament approves the NPS, a third runway will become Government policy. Then in 2018 and 2019 Heathrow will need to draw up and consult on detailed plans which will be submitted to a Planning Inquiry during 2019.

Key points to make in response:

- There are different views on whether a new runway is needed in London and the South East but no need to express an opinion one way or another if you don't want to;
- A third runway would bring many more people under new flight paths;
- The half day's break from the planes which many communities currently enjoy would probably be cut to a third;
- The consultation should have included information as to where the new flight paths should be;
- Heathrow will struggle to comply with air pollution limits if a third runway is built;
- A third runway would require the destruction of at least 783 homes.
- Billions of pounds of taxpayers money would be needed for new rail and road infrastructure.

The DfT has set out **conditions** Heathrow will need to meet. These include guarantees that it will serve 6 regional airports; a night flight ban for six and a half hours; better compensation for people; legally-binding noise targets; predictable periods of respite; and no increase in airport related vehicle traffic. Many of these are clearly good things but the general point to make is that we need more detail before we can make meaningful comments on a lot of them. But a six and a half hour night ban is too short.

Read the main points of the consultation at: <http://hacan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/DfT-consultation-press-release.pdf> Responses should be emailed to runwayconsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Airspace Policy Consultation

This does not just cover Heathrow. It is a national consultation. It deals with 5 key issues: the principles that should be used when flight paths are introduced; the concentration of flight paths; the key areas where noise should be given priority over other issues; an Independent Noise Authority; and revised metrics to assess noise annoyance.

- It is proposing much more public engagement before **new flight paths** are introduced or changes are made to existing flight paths. This is to be welcomed.
- It says that **multiple routes** are an option to avoid concentration over particular communities. This is welcome.
- It argues that **noise should be the key issue** when flying planes below 4,000 ft and only one of the factors between 4,000 and 7,000 ft. That would be a continuation of the current situation. On the basis of where complaints come to us, HACAN argues that noise should be the main consideration up until at least 6,000ft.
- It proposes an **Independent Noise Authority, ICCAN**. It proposes a fully independent body; advisory rather than regulatory. Funding would come from Government to pay for a Board and a Secretariat. It would be housed within the CAA but independent of it. Local communities generally welcome the setting up of an Independent Noise Authority but will want guarantees that it will be truly independent and will have teeth.
- It is proposing **new metrics** to replace the 57 decibel contour as ‘the onset of community annoyance’. This 57 decibel contour has been much criticized as not reflecting reality. In London, for example, it excludes places like Putney and Fulham where aircraft noise is clearly a problem. The DfT proposes replacing it with a 54 decibel contour and even, on occasion, with a 51 decibel contour. These are overdue changes which will reflect more accurately the areas where noise is a problem.

You can find the consultation at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/589099/uk-airspace-policy-consultation-executive-summary.pdf (summary) **Responses** to be emailed to airspace.policy@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Feel free to use anything in this briefing but always remember you don't need to be an expert to respond. Simply explaining how you feel in your own words will be sufficient.

HACAN gives a voice to residents under the Heathrow flight paths. We can be contacted at info@hacan.org.uk; tel 020 8876 0455, website: www.hacan.org.uk

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