

Prospectus

If aviation increases on the scale predicted by the DfT, the UK's 60% carbon emission reduction target which the Government set last year will become meaningless and unachievable **Environmental Audit Select Committee**

The rapid growth of air traffic throughout the world is one of the most severe threats to the global environment today **Sustainable Development Commission**

We should be working extremely hard to introduce a new form of tax on kerosene. **Paul Marsden MP, Liberal Democrat aviation spokesman**

Aviation is subsidising the rich – the rich tend to fly more often than the poor, and the poor are more likely to live under flight paths **Dr Caroline Lucas, Green MEP**

The short-break culture means that instead of one big holiday people are lured by low fares to take multiple short breaks. It can't last, and it musn't **Times columnist Libby Purves**

Despite the fall in relative prices, leisure air travel remains highly skewed towards the better off. Any tax on aviation would be relatively progressive **IPPR**

We need to look again at whether expanding runway capacity on anything like the scale proposed in the White Paper is really necessary **Conservative MP Peter Ainsworth**

The consumer demand for air travel is based on an absurdly subsidised fiscal regime which needs to be fundamentally altered **Michael Meacher MP, former Labour Environment Minister**

AirportWatch aims to oppose any expansion of aviation and airports likely to damage the human or natural environment and to promote an aviation policy for the UK which is in full accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

AirportWatch is the umbrella movement which opposes the aggressive go-for-growth policy of aviation expansion outlined in the Aviation White Paper. AirportWatch has a wide range of support – from many of the country's largest environmental organisations to the protest groups around some of the smaller airports. It has established links with similar bodies in Europe.

AirportWatch believes that government policies to expand aviation can and should be resisted. Already ministers have been surprised by the strength – and unity – of the opposition. They are on the defensive and are unwilling to engage in debate on many of the key arguments.

Building up the Coalition

But it will be a long and difficult battle. We need to build up strength and support. We need to develop contacts with a broader range of individuals and organisations concerned not just with the environment. We need to involve MPs, the churches, women's groups, organisations of older and disabled people, and social justice and youth movements. We need to tap into the support of high profile individuals with good links to the media, business and political parties.

We need, in other words, to build a "jubilee-2000 type" broader coalition to make the full range of arguments for a different approach and persuade the government of the day to listen – and change its policies

- **AirportWatch can be contacted on tel 020 7248 2223, email info@airportwatch.org.uk or check out our website at www.airportwatch.org.uk**

The ambitious targets for technological improvement in some industry announcements are clearly aspirations rather than projections ...these will not offset the effects of growth **Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution**

Hypermobility in the northern world is neatly matched by chronic underprovision of basic accessibility in the South **Professor John Whitelegg**

Generations to come will blame us for this. More than Iraq or terrorism, the deterioration of the environment, under pressure from a fast-growing consumerist human population, will come to be seen as the great issue that the democracies of the early 2000s never faced up to **Jackie Ashley, Guardian journalist**

During my 18 months as an aviation minister I learned two things about the aviation industry. One, that its demands are insatiable. Two, that successive governments always give way in the end **Chris Mullin MP**

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The Aviation White Paper, published in December 2003, planned for a near-trebling of the number of passengers using UK airports by 2030

AirportWatch argues there are very many powerful environmental, equity and economic reasons to oppose the aggressive expansion of aviation

Environmental

➤ Aviation is the fastest-rising contributor to climate change.

➤ World-wide, by 2050, it could account for 15% of all 'man-made' climate change emissions.

➤ Much of the costs of climate change will fall on poor people living in low-lying, low-income, low-flying developing countries.

one person flying from the UK to Miami will produce climate change emissions equivalent to one car clocking up 12,000 miles

➤ The noise climate in the UK will get worse. The increase in aircraft numbers will off-set any advantages from quieter planes.

➤ Ancient woodlands, sites of special scientific interest, listed buildings and the biodiversity of the UK are threatened by the expansion plans.

➤ Much of this environmental damage is caused by leisure travel. Business journeys only account for 24% of all trips. And yet UK tourism receives little benefit from all this leisure travel: there is an annual deficit of around £11 billion in aviation tourism.

Equity

The £9 billion tax concessions enjoyed by the aviation industry each year are regressive:

- it is the top 10% of income-earners who will fly most over the next 30 years, many of them second home-owners taking advantage of cheap, subsidised flights;
- already, even on budget airlines, 75% of trips are made by social classes A, B and C;

The Business of Aviation

the gap between commercial benefits and environmental costs is narrower than ministers have admitted The Economist 22/2/03

The Department for Transport argues in the Aviation White Paper that aviation will contribute £18 billion to the economy in 2015 (1995 prices)

- but this does not factor in the tax concessions of £9 billion a year the industry receives through tax-free fuel and VAT-free transactions
- nor does it include the environmental and social costs aviation imposes on society
- all this is perhaps not surprising since the report, by Oxford Economic Forecasting, on which the White Paper was based, was 90% paid for by the aviation industry.

- the poorest 10% of people hardly ever fly – only 11% of all passengers come from social classes D and E.

While cheap flights have opened up travel opportunities for some people on average incomes, the tax concessions that make them possible are essentially regressive.

AirportWatch argues the tax collected from aviation could be spent on the services low-income people use: schools, hospitals, public transport. Or tax could be cut for those earning least. Or more services provided for disabled people. Or overseas aid increased. Or 'third world' debt written off. All surely more equitable than subsidising flights by second home owners.

a single person on the national average wage of £25,000 pays an extra £557 in income tax to meet the costs of aviation's tax breaks

Economic

The tax concessions distort the market. The aviation industry makes big claims that new runways create jobs. But what neither it nor the Government has dared to do is compare the cost to the Exchequer of creating an aviation-related job with that of a job in an industry which doesn't enjoy aviation's tax breaks. The most detailed study looking at the economic impact of new transport infrastructure was *Transport and the Economy*, published by SACTRA (the Standing Advisory

Committee on Trunk Road Assessment) in 1999. It found that in a mature economy, with already well-developed transport systems (such as the UK), any increase in economic growth from improved transport is likely to be modest. The Department for Transport virtually ignored the SACTRA Report when compiling the Aviation White Paper.

AirportWatch – campaigning for for a sustainable and equitable aviation policy