

Heathrow Consultation

This is one of the biggest consultations there has been from Heathrow and one of the most important for residents. It covers runway alternation, respite, night flights, westerly preference and Independent Parallel Approaches.

HACAN has produced a briefing sheet on each. They are on our website.

We have also produced a 4 page summary of the consultation document which might help you navigate the consultation: <http://hacan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Heathrow-Consultation-summary.pdf>

The full consultation can be found here: <http://hacan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Heathrow-Airspace-and-Future-Operations-Consultation-document-Final-low-res.pdf>

The consultation assumes a third runway will be built. HACAN continues to oppose a new runway but also wants to get the best deal for residents if it is built.

The consultation closes on 4th March.

Runway Alternation and Respite

In summary, many, but not all, areas in West London will find their periods of respite reduced. Some areas west of the airport, like Windsor, will get a break from the noise for the first time. And many places, to the east and west of the airport, will enjoy respite for the first time ever – what Heathrow calls ‘airspace alternation’. It is dealt with in the second section of this briefing.

1. Runway Alternation

The pattern of alternation which is being proposed:

For people under a flight path heading towards either the **northern runway** (that is the new flight path to the new runway) or the **southern runway**, this is the offer:

¼ of the day with no planes

½ the day with ‘moderate’ overflying (i.e. a plane every few minutes rather every 90 seconds)

¼ of the day with a plane every 90 seconds

For people under a flight path heading towards the **middle runway** (the current northern runway)

½ day with no planes

½ day with a plane every 90 seconds

For simplicity, we’ve assumed a period of respite every day though Heathrow is also seeking views on other options such whether people would prefer a whole day of planes followed by one long period of respite.

2. Airspace Alternation

Even if Heathrow remains a two runway airport, there will be changes to its airspace. HACAN has long made the case for multiple flight paths, rotated, in order to give communities further from the airport some predicable respite.

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But there could be some more respite on offer for people within these blocks, thus providing each area with more respite.

Check out pp 2-17 to see the blocks: <https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/01/3649-HRW-3R-A3-maps-booklet-AW-update-2-V1.pdf>.

Remember at this stage we don’t know where the detailed flight paths will be within each block. Heathrow will work those up following this consultation. They are expected to consult on them in about 3 year’s time.

In some of the blocks Heathrow says: “*Flight paths within this area may be active at the same time as flight paths within some of the departures design envelopes over the same area, but departures would be much higher (over 5000ft)*” Check the link.

We have the following suggestions for the detailed flight paths:

- The flight paths and therefore the respite should extend to at least 7,000ft.
- It is important that the flight paths are far enough away from each other for the respite to be meaningful.
- There could be a particular problem for ‘the squeezed middle’: these are areas which could be impacted by aircraft heading for the middle runway plus either the northern or southern runways. Unless the flight paths are carefully designed, meaningful respite for these areas may not occur.
- ‘New areas’ should be avoided if at all possible, but it might be unavoidable if the ‘squeezed middle’ is to get meaningful respite.
- It would be disappointing if flights paths could not be designed so that areas this distance from Heathrow avoid being overflowed by arrivals and departures.
- New flight paths should be coordinated with London City flight paths to avoid, where possible, areas being overflowed by both sets of aircraft at the same time.

Briefing written by John Stewart, chair HACAN

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