

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.

Westerly Preference

Aircraft land and take-off into the wind. But at Heathrow westerly preference operates. This means that aircraft land from the east (over London) not just when there is a west wind blowing but also if the east wind is less than about 5 knots. The consultation is asking whether westerly preference should be retained.

A number of options are set out:

Westerly Preference is retained.

Easterly Preference is introduced (more landings over Berkshire; more take-offs over London)

No Preference is introduced (aircraft switch as soon as the wind direction switches). This would match what London City does and therefore eliminate the days that parts of SE London can get both Heathrow and City aircraft overhead, sometimes a total of over 50 an hour.

Managed Preference is introduced. Heathrow writes in the consultation document: *“we are thinking of moving to a ‘managed’ preference which would involve changing the direction of arriving and departing aircraft based on a set of criteria or rules designed to limit overall noise effects on communities and to help deliver periods of relief for them.”* It could allow Heathrow, wind conditions permitting, to switch the direction of the aircraft, albeit for just a shortish period, to allow residents to get a break from an usually long period of the east or west wind.

Briefing written by John Stewart, chair HACAN

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