



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**A Meeting of an INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER  
DECISION will be held in SF1 - Civic Offices on TUESDAY  
5 MARCH 2019 AT 10.00 AM**

*Heather Thwaites*

Heather Thwaites  
Interim Chief Executive  
Published on 25 February 2019

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# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Our Vision**

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

## **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

## **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

**For consideration by**

**Julian McGhee-Sumner, Leader of the Council**

**Officers Present**

**Robert Curtis, Transport Planning Team Manager**

**Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist**

<b>IMD NO.</b>	<b>WARD</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	
IMD 2019/04	None Specific	<b>HEATHROW AIRSPACE CONSULTATION RESPONSE</b>	<b>5 - 12</b>

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# Agenda Item IMD4

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2019/04

<b>TITLE</b>	Heathrow Airspace Consultation Response
<b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>	Leader of the Council – Julian McGhee Sumner
<b>DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME</b>	5 March 2019 SF1 at 10:00
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER</b>	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)**

Heathrow is a major employer within the Thames Valley and the economy and residents of Wokingham Borough currently benefit from being in proximity to this major driver of economic activity. Expansion of the airport will provide new economic opportunities for our residents.

Heathrow is carrying out a consultation to explore options to minimise noise impacts associated with flights from the airport, this includes a review of existing flight paths, overnight flight times and the directional preference of flights, In addition to making better use of the existing runways, prior to any expansion at the airport.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Leader of the Council (on behalf of the Executive Member for Highways and Transport):

- 1) Notes the contents of the report on Heathrow Airspace and Future operations consultation;
- 2) Approves the response to the HAL (Heathrow Airport Limited) consultation as detailed in this report (appendix A) and;
- 3) Authorises officers to return the response to HAL on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council.

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Heathrow consultation on Airspace and Future Operations is running for 8 weeks between 8 January and 4 March 2019.

The report provides a summary of key aspects of the consultation and outlines a recommended response in Appendix A. This builds on consultations which Wokingham Borough Council responded to previously.

The survey consultation is primarily based on the key area of managing noise through ensuring respite on flight paths and alternating runways and directional preference, and the impact of night flights. The concluding sections are based on future flight paths and managing better use of runways.

The impact on Wokingham Borough appears to be relatively minor, but parts of the borough are overflowed by aircraft using Heathrow albeit at levels over 5,000 feet. The council's response will seek to support the options which provide maximum respite for Wokingham Borough residents and minimise impacts on WBC residents.

## Background

Heathrow Airport are seeking to engage with communities, on the impact of flight paths and overflying, prior to any further development at Heathrow Airport.

Whilst such issues only affect a small minority of residents of the borough, it is important that Wokingham Borough Council respond to ensure there is no increase in flight paths over the borough, which would have a negative effect on residents of the borough.

The consultation document is based around the following three key themes:

- ***Airspace change for an expanded Heathrow:*** “*how we design our future airspace and the local factors we should consider in different geographic areas when designing future flight paths.*”
- ***Airspace change to make better use of the existing two runways:*** “*the local factors we should consider in different geographic areas when designing new flight paths for some arrivals on our existing two runways*”
- ***Future operations for an expanded Heathrow:*** “*how we will operate our three runways in the future, this includes managing noise; respite through runway and airspace alternation; directional preference and night flights.*”

The consultation runs until 4th March 2019. The consultation documents are available to download at <https://www.heathrowconsultation.com/>

Due to the timing of the consultation and council procedures, a holding response based on this report within the consultation period. Following formal consideration of this report, a final response will be provided incorporating any necessary updates.

## Analysis of Issues

The recommended response to the questions set out in the consultation is provided in Appendix A to this report. This builds on consultations which Wokingham Borough Council responded to previously.

A supporting analysis of key issues is set out below.

### *Managing noise for an expanded Heathrow*

Questions on the general review of the proposals to reduce effects of noise, on health and quality of life.

### *Respite through runway and airspace alternation*

With a three runway operation, the alternation of flights between runways would provide respite from noise for communities close to the airport. For communities further away from Heathrow, such as those affected areas in Wokingham Borough, airspace alternation is proposed to enable respite periods for those communities.

### *Directional Preference*

Heathrow are seeking to adopt a managed preference in terms of directional flights, to supersede the existing 'westerly preference'. Work undertaken so far demonstrates a managed preference would minimise the total number of people affected by noise. Through the introduction of managed preferences flight paths which overlap from other airports can also be managed.

### *Night Flights: Early Morning Arrivals*

Currently the early morning flights (04:30-06:00hrs) only use one runway, for an expanded Heathrow with three runways opportunities will exist to schedule these flights across runways, with the same number of flights before 06:00 hours.

### *Night Flights: Other Night Restrictions*

During the night Heathrow is looking at ways to encourage the quietest types of aircraft, through measures such as night time quotas or restrictions of higher landing charges for night time landings or noisier aircraft.

### *Airspace Change*

Heathrow has asked for feedback on the design of proposed flight paths and any special characteristics of locations which should be considered to be sensitive to flights overhead.

As it can be seen, some of the categories are more pertinent to Wokingham Borough, such as directional preference and airspace change, which relate to flights over the borough, and as such could minimise noise disruption for Wokingham Borough residents. Our response to the consultation reflects this which, in summary supports the objectives of the consultation to reduce aircraft noise through the development of noise envelopes and the requirement for regular respite for residents under the flightpaths.

The consultation results are due to be published in Summer 2019, and further guidance on the issues will be published by Heathrow based on the consultation responses.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

*The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.*

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/a	N/a	N/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/a	N/a	N/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/a	N/a	N/a

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
N/a

<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
N/a

<b>SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES</b>	
<b>Director – Corporate Services</b>	No comment received
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	No comment
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	No comment

<b>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</b>
N/a

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
1. Full details of the consultation can be found at: <a href="https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com/">https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com/</a>
2. Appendix A – Consultation Response

<b>Contact</b> Robert Curtis	<b>Service</b> Place
<b>Telephone No</b> Tel: 0118 974 6489	<b>Email</b> robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk

## **IEMD: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Heathrow Airspace and Future Operations Consultation**

### **Appendix A: Response to Consultation**

Heathrow want all responses to be entered via their online portal.

Below are the categorised questions in italics, with Wokingham Borough Council Response in bold.

#### **Summary**

Name: Rob Curtis: Transport Planning Team Manager

E Mail: [robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk)

Postcode; RG40 1BN

This is a response on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council, one of the six Berkshire unitary authorities. Wokingham Borough extends from the Hampshire border to Remenham (opposite Henley-on-Thames) on the River Thames which forms our boundary with Oxfordshire. The three principal towns are Earley, Wokingham and Woodley. The Borough is overflowed by aircraft using Heathrow Airport although the nearest point of the Borough to the Heathrow perimeter is 23km.

#### **Managing noise for an expanded Heathrow**

*Q1a. Do you support our proposals for a noise objective?*

Yes  No  I don't know

*Q1b. Please provide any comments you have on our proposals for a noise objective:*

**A1b: We agree the draft proposal for a noise objective and welcome the commitment to consider the effect of night flights as early morning arrivals give rise to complaints from Borough residents.**

*Q1c. Please provide any other comments or suggestions you have on our proposed approach to developing a package of noise measures for an expanded Heathrow:*

**A1c. We support the proposals to develop noise envelopes and we endorse the moves to reduce aircraft noise at source such as incentivising the use of modern quieter aircraft and requiring airlines to use quieter operating procedures whenever possible.**

#### **Respite through runway and airspace alternation**

*2a. Would you prefer to have longer periods of respite less frequently (all day on some days but no relief on other days) or a shorter period of respite (e.g. for 4-5 hours) every day? Please tick one of the following options:*

- A longer period of respite, but not every day
- A shorter period of respite every day
- I don't know

*Q2b. Please tell us the reasons for your preference:*

**A2b. The principal factor affecting the perception of aircraft noise in the Borough is the direction and strength of the wind with the prevailing wind from the west minimising noise impacts. Therefore, as the wind direction may change overnight so changing the operational pattern, Borough residents are more likely to benefit from respite if that is available every day.**

Q2c. Please provide any other comments or suggestions you have on runway and airspace alternation:

**A2c. The noise envelopes will affect the Borough, although runway alternation has minimal effect upon the Borough.**

### Directional Preference

Q3a. Should we continue to prefer westerly operations during the day and easterly operations at night to reduce the total number of people affected by noise?

Yes  No  I don't know

Q3b. Please tell us the reasons for your answer

**A3b. Following these operational principles minimises aircraft noise for Wokingham Borough residents.**

Q3c. Should we sometimes intervene to change the direction of arriving and departing aircraft to provide relief from prolonged periods of operating in one direction – even if that means slightly increasing the number of people affected by noise?

Yes  No  I don't know

Q3d. Please tell us the reasons for your answer

**A3d. Settled weather conditions may last for some days. Intervening to change operational direction would give some respite to communities affected by overflying and aircraft noise.**

Q3e. Please provide any other comments or suggestions you have on directional preference:

**A3e. None**

### Night Flights Early Morning Arrivals

4a. To help inform our consideration of the options, we want to know whether you would prefer for us to:

Please note the exact times are subject to further evaluation of the options.

- Option 1 - Use one runway for scheduled arrivals from 5.30am (runway time 5.15am)
- Option 2 - Use two runways for scheduled arrivals from 5.45am (runway time 5.30am)
- I don't know

Q4b. Please tell us the reasons for your preference:

**A4b Option 2 simply because it has a later runway time.**

Q4c. Please provide any other comments or suggestions you might have on early morning arrivals:

**A4c. We understand the necessity for early morning arrivals but we have a significant number of Borough residents who consider the aircraft noise from these early morning arrivals is intrusive and disruptive.**

**We note that Heathrow will aim to have easterly operations at night so this perception is likely to continue.**

**Night Flights Other Night Restrictions.**

*Q5a. Please provide any comments or suggestions on how we should encourage the use of the quietest type of aircraft at night (outside the proposed scheduled night flight ban):*

**A5a We consider that Heathrow should use the landing charge mechanism to intensify the use of the quietest types of aircraft as well as charging a premium for flights landing, say, prior to 0630.**

**We recognise that there will be some unscheduled night flights due to a variety of factors. However this should not excuse avoidable delays by airlines such as inadequate turn round times in their schedules resulting in a late arrival or departure. Again, we see the landing charge mechanism being used to encourage airlines to operate within their scheduled timings.**

*Q5b. Please provide any other comments you have on night flights and restrictions:*

**A5b. None.**

**Airspace Change**

*Q6. What sites or local factors should we be aware of in your area (or other area of interest to you), when designing flight paths for an expanded three-runway Heathrow?*

*Please give enough information (e.g. postcode, address or place name) for us to identify the site(s) or local factor(s) you are referring to and tell us why you think it is important. (You have 5000 characters remaining)*

**A6. Having examined the design envelopes proposed for use for airport expansion, we are aware that Wokingham Borough is not in close proximity to Heathrow. Nevertheless, when designing flight paths for an expanded three-runway Heathrow they should avoid our main towns and villages as far as is practically possible and, where some overflying is considered necessary then regular respite should be designed in.**

**We do not consider that there are any special sites of interest within Wokingham Borough which would require special consideration when considering design envelopes for flight paths.**

*Q7. What sites or local factors should we be aware of in your area (or other area of interest to you), when designing new arrival flight paths to make better use of our existing two runways?*

*Please give enough information (e.g. postcode, address or place name) for us to identify the site(s) or local factor(s) you are referring to and tell us why you think this local factor is important. (You have 5000 characters remaining)*

**A7. None**

*Q8 Please provide any other comments you have relating to the airspace elements of the consultation*

**A8. None**

**One last thing**

*Q9. Please provide any other comments you have relating to the airspace elements of the consultation (You have 5000 characters remaining)*

**A9: The consultation documents clearly explained Heathrow's proposals and where consultations responses were invited. The number, coverage and scale of the various information events indicated that Heathrow was taking the consultation seriously.**

*Q10. Please give us your feedback on this consultation (such as the documents, website or events)*

**A10: It was helpful to respond having a Feedback Questionnaire but that was only available at one of the information events.**

*Q11. Please tell us how you found out about this consultation:*

**A11: Invitation from Heathrow**

*Q11a Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or group? By answering yes, you are also confirming that you have authorisation to respond on behalf of the organisation. If yes, please specify the name of your organisation/group and a brief description of its role and membership:*

**A11a: This consultation response has been shared with officers and Councillors of Wokingham Borough Council and is subject to approval for submission, on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council, by Individual Executive Member Decision on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

*Ends.*