

# Agenda Item IMD23

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2019/23

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|--|--|
| <b>TITLE</b>                           | <b>Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation Response</b>        |
| <b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>          | Leader of the Council - John Halsall                           |
| <b>DATE,<br/>MEETING ROOM and TIME</b> | 17 September 2019<br>SF Landing Meeting Room at 11:00am        |
| <b>WARD</b>                            | None Specific;   |
| <b>DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER</b>          | Director of Locality and Customer Services -<br>Sarah Hollamby |

### PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)

To set out a draft response to the current consultation on Heathrow expansion which is open from 18<sup>th</sup> June to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Leader of the Council approves the proposed responses to the questions posed in the Heathrow expansion consultation and gives Officers authority to submit the response on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council.

### SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report outlines the proposed response to the Heathrow expansion consultation on the proposed Development Consent Order Application. This is a major consultation exercise with multiple local, regional and national areas of interest covered. The focus of this report and our response is in relation to the local impact the expansion and increased air travel will have on the environment in terms of greenhouse gases/climate change, noise and air quality, in addition to the impact it will have on local traffic in the borough due, in part, to the fact that the Western Rail Access is not included in Heathrow's proposal.

The Key issues affecting the borough are described in the report with a more detailed analysis provided in Appendix A and then the proposed response is provided in Appendix B.

## **Background**

The Heathrow expansion consultation is on the proposed Development Consent Order Application, including providing preliminary environmental information on the proposed application.

This is a two-stage consultation process relating to the expansion itself as well as other consultations for airspace changes which have been taking place in parallel. In terms of the Airport expansion, the first consultation sought views on the emerging proposals in terms of what the expanded airport could look like, how it might operate, and how we might best mitigate against the potential impacts, including proposals for compensation and noise insulation. The consultation ran from 17 January 2018 – 28 March 2018.

WBC's response to that consultation can be found online at:

<https://wokingham.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24206/Heathrow%20Expansion%20and%20Airspace%20consultation.pdf>

The current consultation has used the responses to the first exercise to help shape their masterplan and is statutory, so Heathrow is required by Government to hold it to determine the preferred plan for expansion.

Since the last consultation, Wokingham Borough Council has declared a Climate Emergency; consequentially support for the expansion of the airport is contingent upon satisfying the Borough Council that the expansion is not detrimental to environmental health, noise, carbon emissions and congestion.

### *Next steps - Development Consent Order (DCO) Process*

After the Airport Expansion Consultation in June 2019, Heathrow will submit a final proposal to the Planning Inspectorate as part of an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008. The DCO application will include requests for a range of powers and authorisations, including powers for the compulsory acquisition of land.

The Planning Act 2008 establishes the consenting process for nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs). NSIPs are projects considered to be so large and important that permission to build them must, by law, be given at a national level by a Secretary of State.

Heathrow will submit an application for development consent (the DCO application) to the Planning Inspectorate, and an independent examining authority will then be appointed to examine it on behalf of the Secretary of State.

## **Analysis of Issues**

The consultation comprises 8 Topic areas each of which contains a number of sub-topics. Within each of these there is further information and documentation resulting in a plethora of information. Whilst every effort has been made to scrutinise this information it has been necessary to focus those on which we anticipate to be of greatest interest to the borough. The topics and sub-topics are listed below (as links to the website):

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Our Preferred Masterplan</b><br>The latest thinking on the layout of the future airport's physical infrastructure is called the Preferred Masterplan.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Airport Masterplans 2022-2050*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Airfield; Terminals, Satellites and Aprons</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Roads and rail; Active travel; and Parking</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Airport supporting development</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Displaced land uses and community facilities; and Utilities</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Landscape; and Water environment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Phasing the expansion of Heathrow</a></li> </ul>  |   |  |
| <b>Travelling to and from Heathrow – surface Access</b><br><br>Describes how they propose to improve and develop transport and travel for an expanded Heathrow to help achieve the pledge to deliver expansion with no more airport-related traffic on the roads than there is today.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Surface Access Introduction*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Public Transport Proposals*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Colleague Travel Proposals</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Car Parking Proposals</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Road User Charging Proposals*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Taxi and Private Hire Proposals</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Freight Proposals</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Intelligent Mobility Proposals</a></li> </ul>   |   |  |
| <b>Construction</b><br><br>Recognising that the construction and operation of an expanded airport will affect the day to day lives of local people  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Indicative Construction Programme</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Construction and logistics management</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Managing the effects of construction*</a></li> </ul>   |   |  |
| Future Operations<br><br>Explains how they propose to operate the runways at a three runway airport.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Future operations introduction</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Runway Alternation*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Directional Preference</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ban on scheduled night flights*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Early Growth*</a></li> </ul>   |   |  |
| Local Neighbourhoods<br><br>This document summarises our proposals for building and operating a three-runway airport, managing our impacts as we grow, and investing in the local area  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contains 17 local topics covering each local area and specifically covering local: noise, transport, Walking and cycling, benefits to the community, construction traffic and how they intend to build and Air Quality</li> </ul>  |   |  |
| Managing the effects of Expansion<br><br>Planned measures to avoid or reduce effects, or to improve the current environment wherever possible.  | <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Environmental Introduction*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Air Quality*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Community</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Health*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Noise*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Noise Insulation*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Socio-economic and Employment*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Transport Network Users</a></li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Biodiversity</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Historic Environment*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Land Quality</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Landscape and Visual Impact</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Water Environment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Carbon</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Climate Change</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Waste</a></li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Environmental Introduction*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Air Quality*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Community</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Health*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Noise*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Noise Insulation*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Socio-economic and Employment*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Transport Network Users</a></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Biodiversity</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Historic Environment*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Land Quality</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Landscape and Visual Impact</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Water Environment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Carbon</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Climate Change</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Waste</a></li> </ul> |
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| Compensation  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Community Fund*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Property and Compensation*</a></li> </ul>   |   |  |
| General   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Airspace change</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Growing Within Environmental Limits*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Development Consent Order*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Comments and Feedback*</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Consultation videos</a></li> </ul>  |   |  |

An overview of the key issues from these documents relating to Wokingham Borough is provided as Appendix A, however, below is a short summary of the key areas of interest including a comment on WBC's proposed response regarding each:

### Greenhouse Gases (GHG)

The GHG emissions (normally expressed as tonnes of Carbon) have been assessed in a preliminary assessment of the likely effects of the expansion project. This does not yet consider any mitigation measures and they are characterised as high probability; with long or continuous duration, permanent but potentially reversible and international in extent, with high magnitude. The combined nature of these effects led to the conclusion that the “Project without mitigation” scenario should be considered to result in a Significant Negative effect.

International flights are by far the largest source of emissions. To address these, the international aviation industry has put in place a scheme known as CORSIA (Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation). CORSIA has been set up by the United Nations to deliver “carbon neutral growth” from 2020 by offsetting the growth in emissions from international aviation.

A framework of potential environmental measures is currently being developed for construction, air transport, airport buildings and ground operations, to ensure reductions in GHG emissions over and above those considered in the without mitigation scenario. As a result, a preliminary assessment of significance has not been made for the “with mitigation” scenario. This assessment will be made in the Environmental Statement as part of the DCO process, but the Airport consider it likely that it will also result in a significant negative effect.

The assessment suggests that over the 2022-2050 assessment period, the total GHG emissions (including international air transport) increase by almost 38%. Despite this increase, Heathrow consider that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from air transport from expansion will not have a material impact on the ability of the UK to meet its carbon reduction targets and budgets.

*WBC position:*

Wokingham Borough Council’s support is conditional upon reassurance that there will be a reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases including carbon emissions, and a clear pathway to carbon neutrality. The data shows that there will be an increase in Carbon/GHG before eventually reducing by the target date of 2050 to become Carbon neutral. WBC does not support any such increase. It is accepted that carbon offsetting will be necessary, though it should be a last resort.

*Air Quality*

In respect of emissions from aeroplanes, aircraft on approach and departure from Heathrow have a limited impact on ground-level concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub>, PM10 and PM2.5 beyond the Airport boundary. This is because aircraft are high enough for emissions to be dispersed before reaching the ground.

Heathrow propose several measures which ensure that the air quality close to the airport is also not adversely affected by the expansion, including ensuring wide separation between emissions and receptors, and providing power and air for aircraft whilst they are stationary to reduce the time engines need to be running.

*WBC position:*

Wokingham Borough Council requires reassurance that the expansion will have no adverse effect on the health and quality of life of our residents, including those who work or visit the area surrounding the airport. Wokingham Borough Council's support is conditional upon it being demonstrated that there is no adverse effect on the health and quality of life of residents from ground-level concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub>, PM10 and PM2.5. It is accepted that this would mainly be from additional traffic caused by poor access to the airport which forces many who might use the train to travel by private car. It is therefore essential that the Western Rail access is completed as part of the proposals.

#### Noise

Aircraft using Heathrow usually fly over the Borough at above 3000ft registering less noise than the prescribed 56db limit contour, where noise mitigation measures are deemed necessary.

Whilst there is no change to the level of noise, the amendments to flight paths will increase the number of flights passing over some areas in Wokingham Borough. It is not clear from the consultation documents if these changes will affect residents in Wokingham Borough. From the information provided the Council considers it likely that additional flights will pass over Wokingham Borough. An increase in aircraft flying lower than 3000ft over Wokingham Borough is not being proposed in the consultation and consequently it is unlikely that there will be any further impact on the level of noise and Wokingham will remain outside the 56db limit contour. As technology progresses and flight paths are amended it is likely that there will be a small decrease in noise levels in the borough.

Heathrow also proposes a change to the night flights. The new proposals contain a period of no operations (except in very exceptional circumstances) lasting 5 hours and 15 minutes from midnight to 05:15 every day. Early morning arrivals will be restricted to one runway starting at 05:15. Currently the Airport has some discretion to allow aircraft not meeting Government criteria to arrive and depart during the period of no operations. As part of the expansion proposals, Heathrow are proposing to remove this additional dispensation and so, in future, only flights permitted under the Government regulations will be permitted to take off and land and the Airport will have no additional discretion.

#### *WBC position:*

As our 2018 response suggested, the issue of aircraft noise affects residents of Wokingham Borough even though our closest point is some 15 miles from the airport. Although we continue to be outside the 56dB limit contour, there are likely to be additional flights passing over the borough. Wokingham Borough Council's support is conditional upon reassurance that any increase in the proposed number of overflights in Wokingham Borough will have no adverse effect on the health and quality of life of residents

## Surface Access

The Airports National Policy Statement (NPS) requires that any application for development consent made by Heathrow must include details of how the Airport will increase the proportion of journeys made to the Airport by public transport, cycling and walking to achieve a passenger public transport mode share of at least 50% by 2030 and at least 55% by 2040. Such a significant modal shift will clearly have a positive impact on both emissions levels and congestion close to the airport.

In response to this requirement, Heathrow have proposed a ‘toolbox’ approach consisting of a number of fixed initiatives to be implemented in all circumstances and a number of more flexible initiatives that can be scaled up or down as needed to meet their commitments and targets. These initiatives are made up of a mix of ‘pull’ measures designed to encourage the use of public transport or cycling or the use of vehicles in a more sustainable way and ‘push’ measures that dis-incentivise car use.

The mode share targets are predominantly achieved through modal shift from taxis and private hire vehicles (PHV) onto enhanced and more competitively priced rail services. The Heathrow Express fare is proposed to be reduced to be broadly similar to the fare charged on the Elizabeth Line and the Elizabeth Line will provide Heathrow with enhanced connectional opportunities. Taxis and PHVs will be subject to the additional Heathrow Vehicle Access Charge, so users will be encouraged to take a taxi or PHV to Paddington to catch the train, rather than taking a taxi or PHV all the way to the Airport. The detailed measures do not include either the Western or Southern Rail Links.

Although Heathrow staff from the area may be dis-incentivised from making regular car journeys to the airport, there will remain a high number of passengers wishing to access the airport from the west and with rail users still having to travel into London to access the airport, the car would still appear to be an attractive option for many.

### *WBC position:*

For Wokingham Borough, the fact that the Western Rail Link is not included is a disappointment. Heathrow does however state that they ‘recognise the importance of the Western Rail Link scheme to the Airport and will therefore contribute to the costs of delivery, based on the benefits to our Airport passengers and in agreement with our regulator’. The Western Rail Link is essential for the borough to ensure that there is less dependence on private motor vehicles to access Heathrow from Wokingham Borough and beyond.

In the event that the Western Rail Link does go ahead, there will be additional pressure on Twyford station and the associated issues there relating to lack of accessibility and parking availability; Heathrow would be expected to provide necessary infrastructure to support any such increase in demand. The level of infrastructure required for this as well as the existing demand needs to be identified. This will need careful negotiation and work with stakeholders so that the best outcome can be achieved for the borough and the local community.

The Council requires reassurance that any increase in carbon emissions resulting from increased traffic in the borough and the potential increased pressure on Twyford Station will be mitigated, this may include investment by Heathrow Airport in active and sustainable transport options within the Borough.

## **Conclusion**

There are four key areas which concern the borough namely the Climate Change Emergency, environmental health, noise and the need for the Western Rail Link. The expansion of Heathrow airport brings with it a range of economic benefits for Thames Valley region including Wokingham Borough. The negative environmental impacts on air quality and noise level, do not adversely affect our communities significantly due to the distance of the borough boundary from the Airport, however, these should be monitored to demonstrate that this remains the case throughout the construction period and once the runway is operational.

In the light of these concerns the support of the Council to the expansion of Heathrow Airport is conditional on:

- The need to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases including carbon emissions and to demonstrate a clear pathway to carbon neutrality by all means which may include offsetting.
- It being demonstrated through monitoring (at a suitable location within the Borough) that any increase in the proposed number of overflights in Wokingham Borough will have no adverse effect on the health and quality of life of residents.
- The need for Western Rail Access and associated improvements to the Twyford Station area.

## **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)   | £0                            | No  | 0                   |
| Next Financial Year (Year 2)      | £0                            | No  | 0                   |
| Following Financial Year (Year 3) | £0                            | No  | 0                   |

### **Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision**

None

### **Cross-Council Implications**

None

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

No EQIA has been completed for this consultation response.

### **SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

|                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Director – Corporate Services | No comments |
|-------------------------------|-------------|

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Monitoring Officer</b>    | No comments |
| <b>Leader of the Council</b> |             |

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| <b>List of Background Papers</b>                                     |
| Appendix A – Overview of relevant consultation materials/information |
| Appendix B – Proposed Response to the Consultation                   |

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