

Press Release

6 October 2020

For Immediate use

TIME FOR HEATHROW TO DROP PLANS FOR EXPANSION

Tomorrow (7th October) marks the beginning of two days of virtual hearings at the Supreme Court. **(1)** Campaigners claim the case for an expanded Heathrow is at its lowest point in the history of the project.

The Court of Appeal ruled in February 2020 that the Government had failed to take the Paris Agreement on climate change into account and this rendered the Airports National Policy Statement unlawful.

Heathrow were granted an appeal by the Supreme Court, but campaigners are confident that the Court of Appeal ruling will be upheld, asserting that the case for expanding Heathrow is now non-existent and the airport should consign their plans for expansion to the dustbin.

Heathrow's ability to finance the project was always tenuous and has been left in tatters by the Covid pandemic. In June, Standards & Poor's issued them a second credit downgrade in just two months. **(2)** Heathrow are now seeking to claw back not only its pre-application expenses, but also the costs of winding down their 3rd runway project team. **(3)**

Evidence gathered by the No 3rd Runway Coalition earlier in the pandemic found that those living under Heathrow's flight paths do not want a return to pre-pandemic levels of aircraft noise and certainly not an additional 260,000 flights per year created by a third runway. **(4)**

Paul McGuinness, Chair of the No 3rd Runway Coalition, said:

"For too long local communities have been blighted by what is already the world's most disruptive airport. It's time for the UK's single largest polluter to drop their expansion plans, which would have resulted in an additional 7 million tonnes of carbon being emitted every year, and required aviation restrictions in less advantaged regions if the UK is to meet its climate commitments".

"Despite it probably being years before aviation demand returns to pre-Pandemic levels, Heathrow appears determined to pollute our communities simply for the benefit of its foreign shareholders. In the absence of more robust regulation, their

plans would simply entrench their monopolistic position and deliver nothing for the UK economy."

Ends.

NOTES

1. The hearings will be live-streamed via the Supreme Court website from 10.30am - 4pm on Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th October <https://www.supremecourt.uk/live/court-01.html>

The question being asked is: *"Did the Secretary of State's failure to take account of the UK's climate change commitments under the Paris Agreement render the designation of the Airports National Policy Statement favouring the development of a third runway at Heathrow Airport unlawful?"*

2. 'Broke Heathrow should not receive any taxpayer cash' https://medium.com/@info_31597/broke-heathrow-should-not-receive-any-taxpayer-cash-efa35cbbd7d5

See also: *"S&P puts Heathrow on watch for possible second downgrade"* <https://www.fnlonon.com/articles/sp-puts-heathrow-on-watch-for-a-possible-second-downgrade-20200602>

3. 'Heathrow saddled with £500m bill from thwarted expansion', NCE, 8th September 2020, <https://www.newcivilengineer.com/latest/heathrow-saddled-with-500m-bill-from-thwarted-expansion-08-09-2020/>
4. Life Under a Flight Path During Lockdown Survey <https://bit.ly/3611J7j>

Representatives from the No 3rd Runway Coalition available for interview – please get in touch to arrange.

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