

PRESS RELEASE

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HEATHROW LEGISLATION MUST BE WITHDRAWN IN LIGHT OF JET ZERO STRATEGY

Campaign organisation the No 3rd Runway Coalition called on the Government to commit to withdrawing the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) considering the detail of the Jet Zero Strategy, launched today (19 July) at Farnborough Air Show.

The Strategy places significant faith in the development of technologies that are in their infancy or do not yet exist to help deliver the decarbonisation of aviation. Despite this faith, the sector will not be able to deliver Net Zero by 2050 with 9 million tonnes of CO₂ still emitted in 2050. This is approximately equivalent to the additional emissions that would be generated by Heathrow's 3rd runway.

The organisation believes the simplest way to assist the aviation sector to make progress in delivering on net zero targets would be for the Government to withdraw policy support for a third runway at Heathrow.

Further, since Parliament designated the ANPS in 2018, the carbon abatement costs of Heathrow expansion have doubled, from £50bn to £100bn wiping out any claimed economic benefit that the project might have delivered (1).

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

This "Strategy" merely acknowledges the problem caused by airlines. So, if the aviation industry is tempted to abuse the headline to greenwash itself, the rest of us should not be taken in.

Let's not forget that the current fleet still has over 20 years to run and no manufacturer has even put a carbon neutral alternative onto the design book. For this reason alone, expansion at Heathrow, which means an additional 260,000 flights, cannot be permitted to go ahead.

Sustainable Aviation Fuels are a long way off and are unlikely to be the panacea. After all, their production emits carbon and even the greenest formula envisaged will still contain 50% kerosene.

So, while acknowledgement of the problem is to be commended, there will be decades before solutions arrive and, until then, the aviation industry needs to behave more responsibly. And that should be the real message to the aviation industry from this Jet Zero Strategy launch".

ENDS.

- 1) Heathrow carbon abatement cost doubles
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/dec/22/cleanup-cost-of-heathrow-third-runway-doubles-to-100bn-mps-told>

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