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HEATHROW EXPANSION STOPPING UK FROM JET ZERO DREAMS

The Government have published, late this afternoon, a Jet Zero Aviation consultation which primarily looks at achieving Net Zero emissions within the aviation sector by 2050, with domestic aviation's target set at 2040 (1).

Campaign group No 3rd Runway Coalition, who want to see plans for a carbon-intensive 3rd runway at Heathrow Airport scrapped, described the Government's approach as "immaterial" until Heathrow expansion is ruled out.

The consultation 'evidence and analysis' document (2) published alongside the main consultation document contains advice from the Government's Climate Change Committee (CCC), states that all the scenarios do not bring down aviation's emissions to net zero. Even with Sustainable Aviation Fuels – which the Government have repeatedly placed a lot of faith in the development of, the sector will still be emitting 9 megatonnes of CO₂ per year in 2050 (3). The document states that due to remaining emissions, cuts will have to be made in other sectors. The consultation asks for views on how to do achieve this.

The reason for these high levels of residual emissions would appear to be because Heathrow expansion is yet to be cancelled. The evidence and analysis document says that the various scenarios put forward are accounting for Heathrow expansion taking place. It cites fact that the National Policy Statement (the policy document upon which Heathrow expansion is based – passed in 2018) still stands, even though this Government have tried to distance themselves from it (4).

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

"It has long been clear that Heathrow's 3rd runway is incompatible with the UK climate targets and would take up the vast majority of aviation's residual emissions in 2050. The Government's laudable goal to achieve decarbonisation in aviation can only be achieved by ruling out Heathrow expansion of once and for all."

ENDS.

Notes

- 1) Jet Zero consultation - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/achieving-net-zero-aviation-by-2050>
- 2) Jet Zero - evidence and analysis document https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1002163/jet-zero-consultation-evidence-and-analysis.pdf
- 3) Table on p. 19 of evidence and analysis document
- 4) Sections A.5 - A.7, page 21/22 of evidence and analysis document