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HEATHROW EXPANSION SHOULD BE SCRAPPED AND AIRSPACE DRASTICALLY IMPROVED, SAYS NEW REPORT

Plans for a third runway at Heathrow should be scrapped and airspace in London improved drastically, a new report recommends.

The report produced by the Greater London Assembly Environment Committee, says that its "most urgent" recommendation is to oppose the expansion of Heathrow because of the impact of the increased numbers of flights would have on Londoners (1).

The report cites guidelines by the World Health Organisation who that frequent exposure to noise above 45 decibels is associated with adverse health effects (2). Yet the threshold set in the Government's guidelines is 54 decibels (3).

As well as opposing a third runway, the Committee also propose a series of drastic improvements to the airspace in London, which, with Heathrow expansion, means up to 2.2 million people right across London will be impacted by the plans (4), in addition to up to 747,300 people impacted by noise from London City Airport (5).

Flight paths should also be less concentrated and more evenly dispersed so specific communities are not impacted overwhelmingly more than others close by, with more weight given to communities in south and east London who are impacted from overflying from both Heathrow and London City Airports (6). Altitude of planes should also be increased, to bring less noise emissions to those on the ground, in densely populated boroughs of London such as Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham (7).

The report also calls for the threshold for compensation levels for aircraft noise from Heathrow planes to be raised in line with those from London City Airport (8), as well as extending night flight bans at Heathrow to eight hours in order to bring in line with World Health Organisation recommended hours for sleep (9).

Rob Barnstone, Coordinator of the No 3rd Runway Coalition, the leading campaign organisation opposing plans for more noise and other emissions from Heathrow Airport, said:

"We welcome the most urgent recommendation of this report being to cancel the third runway.

"London is set to be severely impacted by plans to expand Heathrow, in an already outdated airspace which leaves so many vast swathes of Londoners' lives, in some cases many, many miles from Heathrow, blighted by noise from planes.

"The sensible recommendations in this report should be implemented by the aviation authorities at the very earliest opportunity."

Jackie Clark, Chair of Stop Heathrow Expansion, which represents communities closest to Heathrow Airport, said:

"A third runway means a new flight path, subjecting yet more people to the effects of aircraft noise exposure as well as more dirty air.

The health and wellbeing of people that are impacted most by Heathrow both now and in the future is paramount.

"If the Government and Heathrow were serious about the exposure to these impacts it subjects us to then they would extend the night time flight ban to the recommended eight hours."

ENDS.

Notes:

1. GLA Environment Committee: *Aircraft Noise*, January 2019 (embargoed until 00.01 23/01/19), p. 4
2. *Environmental noise guidelines for the European region*. World Health Organisation 2018. Available online at http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/383921/noise-guidelines-eng.pdf?ua=1
3. *Aviation 2050: the future of UK aviation*, UK Government Green Paper, December 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/aviation-2050-the-future-of-uk-aviation>
4. Heathrow third runway noise would affect 2.2m people, analysis finds <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/09/heathrow-third-runway-noise-affect-people-government-documents>
5. *Report of the CAA's Post Implementation Review of the London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) Phase 1A Module C: Airspace Change Proposal - London City Network Changes*. Available online at [http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP1692C_ModuleC_FinalV3\(P_LINKS\).pdf](http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP1692C_ModuleC_FinalV3(P_LINKS).pdf) accessed
6. GLA Environment Committee: *Aircraft Noise*, January 2019 (embargoed until 00.01 23/01/19), p. 6
7. GLA Environment Committee: *Aircraft Noise*, January 2019 (embargoed until 00.01 23/01/19), p. 5
8. GLA Environment Committee: *Aircraft Noise*, January 2019 (embargoed until 00.01 23/01/19), p. 4
9. GLA Environment Committee: *Aircraft Noise*, January 2019 (embargoed until 00.01 23/01/19), p. 7

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