

14 January 2019

*For immediate use*

## GOVERNMENT TRIES TO ‘TRUMP’ ITS OWN CLIMATE POLICY

- **ASSERTS THAT DELIVERING PARIS AGREEMENT IS NOT POLICY**
- **DENIES INTENTION TO LIMIT WARMING TO 1.5°C**

The pre-trial hearing for the series of legal challenges against the Government’s decision to expand Heathrow takes place at the Royal Courts of Justice in London on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January (1).

In legal correspondence between the defendant (Government) and one of the claimants, Plan B Earth, the Government argues that “[*Plan B*] is wrong to assert that “Government policy is to limit warming to the more stringent standard of 1.5°C and “well below” 2°C (2).

This means that the Government is effectively denying that its own policy is to limit warming to the level that has been agreed internationally is required to avoid climate breakdown.

The legal challenge brought by Plan B Earth and Friends of the Earth assert that the Government decision to proceed with Heathrow expansion was unlawful as it failed to appropriately consider climate change. **Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell described the case as “the iconic battleground against climate change” (3).**

The Committee on Climate Change had previously expressed surprise that neither the commitments in the Climate Change Act 2008 or the Paris Agreement (2015) were referenced in the Airports National Policy Statement.

**Paul McGuinness, Chair of the No 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway Coalition said:**

*“The Government appears to be trying to contradict its own policy, agreed at an international to seek to avert climate catastrophe. The evidence for action is overwhelming, agreed by the scientific community and nation states alike.*

*“Yet, it appears that Government is happy to deny this policy when it becomes inconvenient to the delivery of their pet project of Heathrow expansion. It is time for the Government to pursue sustainable alternatives and not continue to lock the UK into carbon intensive infrastructure.”*

ENDS.

Notes:

1. High Court, Court 76, 1030am <https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/court-lists/list-cause-rcj>
2. <https://planb.earth/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/REPLY-TO-DGR.pdf>
3. John McDonnell MP outside the High Court, 4 October 2018

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