

**RESS RELEASE**

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*For immediate use*

**NOW CHRIS GRAYLING UPSETS HIS OWN PATCH WITH HEATHROW PLANS**

Chris Grayling's popularity within his own constituency looked set to take a nose dive judging by the response from residents and the local authority to a consultation as part of the plans to build a new runway at Heathrow airport – a plan Mr. Grayling has labelled a “historic moment” for the future of the UK (1).

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council responded to the Airspace and Future Operations consultation on Friday, slating the plans for new airspace arrangements which would see up to 47 planes per hour flying at just 3,000 feet (2). Currently no planes fly over the area below about 6000 feet altitude. The proposals feature in the new ‘design envelopes’ of areas where planes would fly over (3). The Council also raised concerns about the lack of consultation in the area about the plans.

Cllr Eber Kington, Chair of the Council's Strategy and Resources Committee said that “these proposals could translate into an estimated four to five-fold increase in noise levels in addition to the significant additional impact from the frequency of flights overhead...Epsom and Ewell is already the most densely populated borough in Surrey, it faces greater risks from poor air quality and already has a declared Air Quality Management Area....therefore, significantly more residents and businesses would be impacted by the increase in air traffic and aircraft flying at significant lower altitudes in the airspace above and around the borough.”

Even without the new runway, the proposed the adoption of Independent Parallel Approach on the existing two runways would see 25 flights per hour as low as 3,000 feet from 6 – 7am. The Council notes that the borough's northern border is close to an area proposed to see flights as low as 2,000ft.

**Sarah Clayton, a resident of Epsom, expressed her outrage at the plans:**

*“These plans are deeply upsetting for my family and neighbours in the area. Not only has Chris Grayling's never-ending list of failures had numerous negative impacts and cost the country hundreds of millions of pounds, but his keenness for a new runway at Heathrow is going to make the area a noise sewer.*

*“He has actively supported and pushed through proposals to reduce the quality of life and the pleasantness of his own constituency. That is a derogation of duty to his own voters. I'd like him to resign.”*

**Rob Barnstone, Coordinator of the No 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway Coalition, said:**

*“Chris Grayling has failed the very people he represents in Parliament. By spearheading Heathrow expansion, he is dumping on his own constituents and many hundreds of thousands of others who will be newly overflown or have many more Heathrow planes over their homes as a result.*

*"We know that disturbance from aircraft noise, particularly at lower levels of altitude, has a series of health impacts, including but not limited to hypertension, onset of heart disease, decreased mental wellbeing and performance of children at school. How much is he costing local people in terms of their health and wellbeing, by spearheading the plans for an extra 260,000 flights per year into Heathrow?"*

***ENDS.***

Notes:

1. Chris Grayling, Statement to Parliament, 5 June 2018  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/proposed-heathrow-expansion>
2. Borough Council sends robust response to Heathrow's expansion plans <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/news/borough-council-sends-robust-response-heathrows-expansion-plans?platform=hootsuite>
3. Heathrow Airspace Design Envelopes For Expansion, pp. 7, 9, 23.  
<https://afo.heathrowconsultation.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2019/01/3649-HRW-3R-A3-maps-booklet-AW-update-2-V1.pdf>

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