

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate use

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCE ANOTHER NEW RUNWAY NEEDED BY 2050 IN ADDITION TO HEATHROW

- **CAMPAIGNERS ARGUE THIS BRINGS A NEW DIMENSION OF DOUBT TO HEATHROW PLANS**

The Government will open the door for another new runway to be delivered by 2050, in addition to the plans for expansion at Heathrow, in a consultation to be launched next month (1).

The Aviation Strategy Green Paper will consult on the decision-making process for delivering a further runway in the UK by 2050, according to Sarah Bishop, Deputy Head of Aviation Policy at the Department for Transport. Ms. Bishop stressed the need for exploring a further runway came as a result of figures from 2015 that were now out of date to the extent that another runway could be needed by 2050.

It remains unclear how any further runway could be delivered within legally binding carbon emission targets to reduce emissions by 2050. For aviation this would bring emissions to 2005 levels. The Committee on Climate Change warned as recently as June 2018 that higher levels of aviation emissions in 2050 “must not be planned for” and raised a series of concerns about how one additional runway would be compatible with efforts to reduce emissions, let alone two (2).

However, campaigners believe that the announcement brings a fresh dimension of doubt to the existing plans for Heathrow expansion and could worry investors behind the existing Heathrow project, were it to be cancelled later through overruns and a rival scheme being built quicker and more efficiently. Taxpayers would also be exposed to this doubt through a cost-recovery clause that Heathrow agreed with the Government in 2016 (3).

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

“With the financial and legal challenges of Heathrow’s third runway far from overcome, this new option for another runway is likely to bedevil Heathrow’s plans going forward, bringing a fresh dimension of doubt to the current project.

“It truly beggars’ belief that a further runway is even being mooted. Given environmental targets are struggling to be met with the existing Heathrow plans, yet another new runway would make a laughing stock of the UK’s commitment to the environment.

“Maybe the Government is having its own doubts on Heathrow and is trying to find a way out?”

ENDS.

Notes:

1. Transcript of speech available

2. Committee on Climate Change letter to Chris Grayling, 14 June 2018
<https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CCC-letter-to-DfT-on-Airports-National-Policy-Statement.pdf>
3. Government's cost-recovery deal with Heathrow
<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/2018/06/government-signs-seal-to-bail-out-heathrow-possible-massive-cost-to-taxpayers/>

For more information:

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