



# Third Runway Consultation

## What's happening about the 3rd runway?

The Government put it on the back burner. In the Aviation White Paper, published in December 2003, the Department for Transport said that it was looking for

- A 2nd runway at Stansted to be opened by 2011/12
- A 3rd runway at Heathrow to be opened by 2015/20 (*but only if the air pollution problems can be sorted out*)
- A 2nd runway at Gatwick, not before 2019, if Heathrow cannot be sorted out.

## Why is air pollution such a big problem at Heathrow?

The European Union has issued a Directive on air pollution levels. It applies to all member states. It sets out maximum legal limits for air pollution (to come into force in 2010). The Government feared that air pollution levels at Heathrow would exceed the EU legal limits if a 3rd runway was built. Although a lot of the pollution in the area comes from car traffic, it feared a 3rd runway would tip the balance.

## So why is the Government now consulting on a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway?

The Department of Transport carried out work to look again at the predictions that air pollution levels at Heathrow may exceed legal limits if a 3rd runway was built. It is arguing that air pollution levels around Heathrow can stay within the EU legal limits if a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway was built because aircraft and cars will become a lot cleaner over the next 20 years. Many people find that claim to be over-optimistic.

## What will be the effects of a 3rd runway?

- Thousands of people will lose their homes in Harmondsworth, Sipson and Harlington;
- Whole communities will be wiped out, with many ancient buildings destroyed;
- The total number of planes using Heathrow will rise from 473,000 per year at present to over 700,000;
- Over 150,000 people will be directly under the new flight path, taking in Heston, Southall, Chiswick, North Hammersmith and Kensington and Chelsea to the east and Langley, Slough and Maidenhead to the west; there will also be new take off paths over Southall, Harrow, Richmond and Hammersmith.
- A 3<sup>rd</sup> runway alone will emit as much CO<sub>2</sub> (the climate change pollutant) in one year as the entire Kenyan economy does in a year.

## Who's for and who's against a 3rd runway?

### Against:

the local authorities in the area - the vast majority of local MPs – most local residents – at least 6 trade unions - concerned environmentalists across the UK.

### For:

British Airways are very keen - BAA - a number of trade unions - the Department for Transport.

## When will we have more definite news?

The consultation ended on 27<sup>th</sup> February. The Government will announce its decision in January 2008. If it gives the go-ahead in principle, it will say it is up to BAA to come up with detailed plans. But any decision to give the go-ahead would meet with furious protests and may not be final as both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats say they would scrap Heathrow expansion.

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