

Heathrow makes obvious attempt to bribe residents, say four councils



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The airport has today revealed plans that they claim, should the airport be given the go ahead for an additional runway, would enable them to add extra flights at the current airport until construction is complete.

This would introduce 25,000 extra flights from the airport, while they claim an imposed vehicle emissions charge will reduce congestion in the local area and a push back to 5.30am for the start of flights will be an improvement on the misery night flights inflict.

Richmond, Wandsworth, Hillingdon and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead councils have been campaigning against Heathrow expansion for more than a decade. Heathrow expansion would mean increased noise and pollution, which would affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of residents in South West London and East Berkshire.

Lord True, Leader of Richmond Council, said: “Yet again this is another feeble emotional bribe from Heathrow. They have cherry-picked one of the many valid reasons against expansion and made woolly commitments that they simply cannot deliver. Londoners should not be fooled.

“The bottom line is that 25,000 flights will still damage the environment and cause much distress to millions of people in West London.

“We have now waited long enough for this decision. We have already made our feelings clear to the Government. Should they rule in favour of a Heathrow expansion - we will fight it in the courts. Instead, they should focus on Gatwick. The airport can be expanded and jobs created. A Gatwick



expansion is cheaper but more importantly quicker and with no recourse to public subsidy or additional cost to passengers.”

Cllr Ravi Govindia, Leader of Wandsworth Council, said: “25,000 extra flights means only one thing - more noise misery for thousands of people living under the flightpath in Wandsworth. We’ve been clear all along that enough is enough and we simply cannot not stand by and let Heathrow think it can decide what it thinks is an acceptable deal for local residents.

“We have called on Heathrow to retime its early morning arrivals - every time we have been fobbed off with excuses why the numbers cannot be reduced. Now suddenly when the airport thinks a third runway might be in its grasp we see it is in fact perfectly possible to retime around 25% of the flights before 5:30am. Today’s offer is simply not good enough, the airports commission was very clear - there should be a ban on all night flights until 6am”.

Cllr Ray Puddifoot, Leader of Hillingdon Council, added: “Heathrow already has a massive noise footprint with about 725,000 people already exposed to noise above the recommended noise limit.

“A third runway would give Heathrow a noise pollution record that is worse than that of the top five European airports put together. This latest plan to add more flights before it is even constructed will just add more environmental damage on top of the chaos the construction of an additional runway will already bring to the area.”

Cllr Simon Dudley, Leader of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, said: “This desperate final roll of the dice by Heathrow would mean even greater misery for residents in the Royal Borough. We stand ready with our three local authority partners to launch a vigorous legal action against any expansion of Heathrow.

“The environmental, health, financial and competition weaknesses of their plans cannot be dressed up in some post Brexit cloak of subterfuge and spin.”