

London Cycling Campaign response to Heathrow Airport expansion consultation

13 September 2019

<https://www.heathrowconsultation.com/>

About the London Cycling Campaign

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 20,000 supporters of whom over 11,000 are fully paid-up members. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in Greater London; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

This response was developed with input from LCC's borough groups.

General comments on this scheme:

- This response is concerned solely with the potential impacts on cycling to, from, in and around Heathrow Airport given the proposed expansion of the airport.
- The response by the Ealing Cycling Campaign is particularly highlighted and supported; it contains more detail on the points raised here.
- As it stands, the consultation masterplan does not sufficiently enable cycling to make reaching a 6% target mode share likely. It is vital that high capacity, comfortable and direct routes are available to those cycling not just around, and to and from the perimeter to all key nearby residential areas, but also into and through the airport, with such access provided not just north-south, but also east-west too.

Specific points about this scheme:

- As per the TfL evidence highlighted by the Ealing Cycling Campaign, the vast majority of current cycle journeys and potential journeys that could be switchable to cycling are below 8km. (94% of cycle journeys in London are below this distance.)
- The current masterplan uses the perimeter as the point which journeys to and from Heathrow Airport are measured. However, this fails to take into account the already large distances those cycling to the airport must travel around the perimeter and into the airport to reach their actual destination. These distances will increase significantly in most cases with airport expansion. So planning for full end-to-end journeys is vital.
- To ensure a suitably high cycling mode share, in order to reduce congestion, collisions, climate changing emissions, air quality, inactivity etc., the distances and times involved demand that there must be not just north-south but also east-west and potentially further access routes into and through the airport by cycling. Forcing those cycling to park and switch mode at the perimeter and/or ride long distances

around the perimeter, will ensure the masterplan's targets on cycling are entirely missed.

- Instead, safe, direct and comfortable cycle routes will be required to join as many residential areas outside and employment centres inside the perimeter directly, with total journey distances ideally no more than 8km. Obviously, this also means large numbers of cycle parking spaces will be required immediately next to (or underneath) these employment centres.
- The most likely answer to this is to use existing and potentially new tunnels to provide north, south, east, west connections into the airport, prioritising short, direct routes from key residential areas to key employment areas.
- For cycling in, around and through the area – for employees, visitors, residents in the area etc. it is also vital that these tunnels (or routes) go not just into and out of the airport, but through. Failure to provide through routes would mean that Heathrow Airport would remain one of the largest single barriers to cycling permeability in London, and become significantly worse.
- There are examples, internationally, of airports providing access, into and through, airports. The masterplan should be further developed with these in mind.
- The masterplan does not appear to have fully provided for the highest-priority routes that are highlighted in the Propensity to Cycle Tool, nor in TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis. Further work should be done to ensure that the "spoke" routes in the masterplan accurately reflect future potential, developments etc. And again, that these spokes prioritise short distance journeys and facilitating as many people as possible to cycle to/from the airport.

General points about infrastructure schemes:

- The Mayor's Transport Strategy relies on a growth in cycle trips to keep London moving. This means infrastructure schemes must be designed to accommodate growth in cycling. Providing space for cycling is a more efficient use of road space than providing space for driving private motor vehicles, particularly for journeys of 5km or less. In terms of providing maximum efficiency for space and energy use, walking, cycling, then public transport are key.
- As demonstrated by the success of recent Cycle Superhighways and mini-Holland projects etc., people cycle when they feel safe. For cycling to become mainstream and enable all ages and abilities to cycle, a network of high-quality, direct routes separate from high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic is required to/from all key destinations and residential areas in an area. Schemes should be planned, designed and implemented to maximise potential to increase journeys – with links to nearby amenities, residential centres, transport hubs considered from the outset.

- Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling meet TfL's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to cycle.
- All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people.
- Evidence from TfL and from many schemes in London, the UK and worldwide shows the economic benefits, including to businesses, to be found from enabling a wider range of people to cycle more. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity, as mentioned above.
- LCC wants, as a condition of funding, all highway development designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with a Cycling Level of Service (CLOS) rating of 70 or above, with all "critical issues" eliminated. Above 2,000 Passenger Car Unit (PCUs) motor vehicle movements per day, or 20mph motor traffic speeds, cycling should be physically separated from motor traffic.