

Heathrow Expansion

23 March 2018

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

About the London Cycling Campaign

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 40,000 supporters of whom 12,000 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 including groups in Harrow, Ealing, Richmond and Hillingdon.

General comments:

This consultation response does not provide an opinion on the viability of an extra runway or other expansion of Heathrow Airport per se, solely concentrating on the infrastructure changes that might occur and therefore their potential impact on cycling to, from and in the area around Heathrow Airport.

That said, any expansion of Heathrow Airport must not lead to an increase in climate-changing emissions, or any increase, in motor vehicle volumes (and resulting pollution and emissions) travelling to, from, inside or nearby Heathrow Airport.

Vital to reducing motor vehicles will clearly be enabling a far higher share of people travelling to, from, in and around Heathrow Airport to use modes other than the private motor vehicle (including taxis and private hire vehicles etc.). For passengers, the dominant form of mode to switch to will likely be public transport. But for those working at or around Heathrow, cycling will be a very important mode indeed in enabling journeys to be switched away from private motor vehicles. To achieve this beneficial switch in transport modes conditions for cycle access to Heathrow must be improved.

Specific points about the scheme:

- Much of the language and lack of detail in the consultation document betrays a lack of will to take the action needed to actually make meaningful changes. The airport cannot rest with "promoting walking and cycling", it must "ensure" such journeys are "enabled" instead. (In other words, one can promote walking and cycling by telling people they're good things to do, but this is insufficient to deliver modal shift.) And the airport should not be "targeting no increase of airport related vehicles on the road". It must ensure no increase, not just within the airport's perimeter, but across the area. Indeed "ensuring further measures are ready to be introduced, if required, to reduce road journeys and emissions and encourage sustainable forms of transport" implies that the least the Airport authority can do, will be done. The airport should be targeting a reduction in overall emissions, pollution and motor vehicle

movements and detailing what it will do to absolutely ensure that target comes to pass. We recommend that the airport sets a concrete target for cycle journeys for staff that exceeds TfL targets for London as a whole and then develops a plan to deliver the infrastructure necessary to meet that target.

- TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis highlights key cycling routes to and from Heathrow Airport and in the area that require urgent improvements to unlock their potential to enable far more people to cycle their journeys in the area. These include corridors aligned with Bath Road and Staines Road east-west, and High Street Harlington, the A408, Parkway and A3063 north-south. These corridors should be improved as a priority, and prior to the delivery of any major changes at Heathrow Airport.
- The Strategic Cycling Analysis also highlights areas of high potential to increase cycle use, and they include Hayes, Yiewsley, Southall and Hounslow (and Harmondsworth and Sipson, although any runway expansion may affect this). Given this, again, these areas should be a priority for cycling improvements to enable far more people to cycle. Much of the area surrounding the airport is inhospitable to cycling and/or walking, and any plan for Heathrow should aim to provide far better walking and cycling routes, connections and neighbourhoods across as large an area as possible, ideally to 6km distance from the site boundary for cycling and at least 2km for walking, but with the above highlighted neighbourhoods prioritised.
- Far greater detail and thought is needed, although it is recognised this consultation is not the place for it, on ensuring that a far higher proportion of those working in, or nearby, Heathrow Airport are able to access their workplaces by cycling. This thought should not, of course, simply be limited to external cycling routes towards the Airport. And it is notable that current plans for Cycle Superhighway CS9 appear to only run high-quality, high capacity cycle routes as far as Hatton Cross. Yet Heathrow Airport's own January 2018 document on "Developing a Surface Access Strategy" states: "currently fewer than 1% [employees at Heathrow cycle to work]. Almost 20,000 airport colleagues currently live within a 5km distance of the airport boundary - a comfortable cycling distance."
- Given the size of airport, even before any expansion, internal cycling routes are required, designed to a high-quality, as well as routes around and/or through the airport. This should include determining : how the north-south tunnels link and operate for cycling (for a far wider range of people than currently cycle in the area); implementation of on-surface safe cycling routes to and from terminals, key employee amenities, workplaces and other locations: provision of cycle parking – both for those moving about the airport and those arriving at and leaving from it; provision of key links to amenities, population centres and other associated workplaces beyond the airport itself. It is notable that Heathrow has removed internal cycling routes, and appears to currently favour cycle hubs and shuttle buses. However this strategy does not appear to have resulted in an increasing mode share of trips for cycling and should be rejected.

- Consideration should also be given to “multi-modal” trips – for instance, ensuring there are good cycling links to and from population centres to underground stations on the same line as Heathrow, and from stations near Heathrow to key cycling destinations in and around the airport.
- It is vital to understand also, that as well as enabling cycling through provision of safe, comfortable and high-capacity direct routes, it will also be important to discourage private motor vehicle traffic. For that reason, we support moves to introduce road-user charging, and/or other methods to reduce private motor vehicle volumes (workplace parking levies, levies on taxi, private hire and other private motor vehicle pick-up and drop-off etc.), but these approaches must be considered across the entire area to avoid either displacing private motor vehicle journeys to a few stops down the underground line, or failing to reduce private motor vehicle trips to nearby hotels etc.

General points about cycling schemes:

- LCC requires schemes to 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, 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 mode 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.
- 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.