



Department
for Transport

Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the South East of England

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Planning Act 2008

Moving Britain Ahead

June 2018

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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The UK aviation sector plays an important role in the modern economy, contributing around £20 billion per year¹ and directly supporting approximately 230,000 jobs.² The positive impacts of the aviation sector extend beyond its direct contribution to the economy by also enabling activity in other important sectors like business services, financial services, and the creative industries. The UK has the third largest aviation network in the world, and London's airports serve more routes than the airports of any other European city.
- 1.2 However, London and the South East are now facing longer term capacity problems. Heathrow Airport is operating at capacity today, Gatwick Airport is operating at capacity at peak times, and the whole London airports system is forecast to be full by the mid-2030s.³ There is still spare capacity elsewhere in the South East for point to point and especially low cost flights. However, with very limited capability at London's major airports, London is beginning to find that new routes to important long haul destinations are being set up elsewhere in Europe. This is having an adverse impact on the UK economy, and affecting the country's global competitiveness.⁴
- 1.3 In September 2012, the Coalition Government established the independent Airports Commission to examine the scale and timing of any requirement for additional capacity to maintain the UK's position as Europe's most important aviation hub, and identify and evaluate how any need for additional capacity should be met in the short, medium and long term.⁵
- 1.4 In its Interim Report in December 2013, the independent Airports Commission concluded that there was a need for one additional runway to be in operation in the South East of England by 2030.⁶ It also confirmed three shortlisted capacity schemes for further analysis: a Second Runway at Gatwick Airport (proposed by Gatwick Airport Ltd.), a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport (proposed by Heathrow Airport Ltd.), and an Extended Northern Runway at Heathrow Airport (proposed by Heathrow Hub Ltd.). The Airports Commission then consulted further on the three shortlisted schemes, plus proposals for a new airport in the inner Thames Estuary. In September 2014, the Airports Commission concluded not to consider further an inner Thames Estuary scheme.⁷
- 1.5 In its Final Report in July 2015, the Airports Commission unanimously concluded that the proposal for a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport, combined with a significant

¹ ONS, Input-Output Supply and Use tables, 2014

² ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, 2014

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-updated-cost-and-benefits-appraisal> Updated Appraisal Report, p11

⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/440316/airports-commission-final-report.pdf Airports Commission: Final Report, p3

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airports-commission-interim-report>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inner-thames-estuary-airport-summary-and-decision>

package of measures to address its environmental and community impacts, presented the strongest case and offered the greatest strategic and economic benefits.

- 1.6 The Airports Commission's remit also required it to look at how to make best use of existing airport infrastructure, before new capacity becomes operational.⁸ The Commission noted in its final report that a new runway will not open for at least 10 years. It therefore considered it imperative that the UK continues to grow its domestic and international connectivity in this period, which it considered would require the more intensive use of existing airports other than Heathrow and Gatwick.⁹
- 1.7 On 14 December 2015, the Government accepted the Airports Commission's recommendation for increased capacity in the South East of England, and its shortlisted scheme options. The Government also confirmed that it would begin work on the building blocks of an Airports National Policy Statement ('Airports NPS'), and this is what happened.¹⁰
- 1.8 The Government believes that an NPS is the most appropriate method to put in place the planning framework for a new runway in the South East of England.¹¹ All three shortlisted airport schemes would have been classed as nationally significant infrastructure projects under the Planning Act 2008, and the Government's view is that an Airports NPS, and a development consent application made under the Planning Act 2008, is the most appropriate route to deliver the Government's preferred scheme.
- 1.9 In its announcement on 14 December 2015, the Government made clear that it would be important to undertake further work regarding the final location of the preferred scheme. This included additional work on air quality, noise, carbon, and mitigating impacts on affected local communities.
- 1.10 On 25 October 2016 the Government announced that a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport, combined with a significant package of supporting measures, was its preferred scheme to deliver additional airport capacity in the South East of England. It also confirmed that this would be included in a draft Airports NPS, to be the subject of consultation according to the procedures laid down in the Planning Act 2008.¹²
- 1.11 The draft Airports NPS and supporting Appraisal of Sustainability were published on 2 February 2017 and a 16 week public consultation was launched. On publishing the draft Airports NPS, the Government made a commitment to continue updating its evidence base on airport capacity, including revised passenger demand forecasts and the impact of the publication of the final Air Quality Plan (the UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations). On 24 October 2017, the Government published and conducted an 8 week public consultation on a revised draft Airports NPS and other documents which were published alongside it. The revisions were made on the basis of changes to the evidence base and as a result of initial consideration of the responses to the February consultation and other broader government policy changes. Having considered the responses to both the February and October consultations, and the report published by the Transport Committee on 23 March 2018, the Government has made some further changes, principally to provide greater clarity and reflect updates to wider Government policies.

⁸ *Airports Commission: Interim Report*, paragraph 5.2

⁹ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, paragraph 16.40

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/aviation-capacity>

¹¹ Throughout this document, unless specified otherwise, the term "NPS" refers to the Airports NPS. Other NPSs, for example the National Networks NPS, are referred to in full as required

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/airport-capacity>

Purpose and scope of the Airports NPS

- 1.12 The Airports NPS provides the primary basis for decision making on development consent applications for a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport, and will be an important and relevant consideration in respect of applications for new runway capacity and other airport infrastructure in London and the South East of England. Other NPSs may also be relevant to decisions on airport capacity in this geographical area.
- 1.13 The Airports NPS sets out:
- The Government's policy on the need for new airport capacity in the South East of England;
 - The Government's preferred location and scheme to deliver new capacity; and
 - Particular considerations relevant to a development consent application to which the Airports NPS relates.
- 1.14 It sets out planning policy in relation to applications for any airport nationally significant infrastructure project in the South East of England, and its policies will be important and relevant for the examination by the Examining Authority, and decisions by the Secretary of State, in relation to such applications.
- 1.15 In particular, the Secretary of State will use the Airports NPS as the primary basis for making decisions on any development consent application for a new Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport, which is the Government's preferred scheme. The policies in the Airports NPS will have effect in relation to the Government's preferred scheme, having a runway length of at least 3,500m and enabling at least 260,000 additional air transport movements per annum.¹³ It will also have effect in relation to terminal infrastructure associated with the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme and the reconfiguration of terminal facilities in the area between the two existing runways at Heathrow Airport. For the avoidance of doubt, the Airports NPS does not identify any statutory undertaker as the appropriate person or appropriate persons to carry out the preferred scheme.
- 1.16 It is possible that an applicant for development consent in respect of the preferred scheme will promote more than one application for development consent, dealing with different components individually. To the extent that this is the case, the Secretary of State will apply the Airports NPS to such applications to the extent that he or she determines to be appropriate in the circumstances.
- 1.17 For a scheme to be compliant with the Airports NPS, the Secretary of State would expect to see these elements comprised in its design, and their implementation and delivery secured, particularly with regard to runway length and increased capacity of air transport movements. Other NPSs may also be relevant to decisions on nationally significant infrastructure projects at airports but, if there is conflict between the Airports NPS and other NPSs, the conflict should be resolved in favour of the NPS that has been most recently designated.
- 1.18 Under section 104 of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must decide any application in accordance with any relevant NPS unless he or she is satisfied that to do so would:

¹³ The Airports NPS stipulates the length of the new runway to ensure that the new infrastructure can accommodate the largest commercial aircraft, as they operate many of the long haul flights that support the UK's position as a major aviation hub

- Lead to the UK being in breach of its international obligations;
- Be unlawful;
- Lead to the Secretary of State being in breach of any duty imposed by or under any legislation;
- Result in adverse impacts of the development outweighing its benefits; or
- Be contrary to legislation about how the decisions are to be taken.¹⁴

1.19 The Airports NPS refers in some places to other relevant documents. These other documents may be replaced, updated or amended over the lifetime of the Airports NPS, and so successor documents should be referred to when this is the case.

1.20 Unlike the regime for the granting of planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, there is no provision in the Planning Act 2008 for the making of an ‘outline’ application for development consent, followed by ‘reserved matters’ approval. This does not mean, however, that development cannot be phased, so that particular parts are brought forward at different times, or that the details of a proposal cannot be reserved for determination later. Guidance by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government recognises that development projects advanced through the development consent order process may be phased, but emphasises that every phase of the project contained in a development consent application must be considered in the application for the order and the order itself.¹⁵

Duration

1.21 The Airports NPS covers development that is anticipated to be required by 2030 as well as other development required to support it. It will remain in place until it is withdrawn, amended or replaced. It will be reviewed, in accordance with the Planning Act 2008, when the Secretary of State considers it appropriate to do so. When considering whether to review the Airports NPS, the Secretary of State will look at whether there has been a significant change in any circumstances on which the policy was based and whether such change was anticipated when the Airports NPS was designated.

Territorial extent

1.22 The Airports NPS covers England only. Some aspects of aviation noise policy are devolved but others are reserved.¹⁶

1.23 Aviation policy is largely a reserved matter, though planning policy is not. Specifically:

- The National Assembly for Wales has devolved powers relating to airports in terms of land use planning and surface access policy;
- The Scottish Parliament has competence for planning in Scotland, and some powers in relation to aerodromes are also devolved to the Scottish Parliament; and
- The Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly have devolved powers relating to airports in terms of regional land use planning, surface access policy and funding,

¹⁴ Planning Act 2008, section 104 – decisions in cases where an NPS has effect

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-pre-application-process-for-major-infrastructure-projects>

¹⁶ For the avoidance of doubt, references to matters which are “reserved” in this section refer to those matters of legislative responsibility reserved to the Westminster Parliament under the UK’s devolution arrangements

and environmental policy. The Northern Ireland Executive also has responsibility for airport economic regulation, has powers over land in relation to aviation safety, has the ability to grant aid for airports infrastructure, and may exercise certain controls relating to the management of airports.

European Union

- 1.24 On 29 March 2017 the Government formally notified the European Council of its intention to withdraw from the European Union, as provided for under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. Until the UK has left the EU, it remains a full Member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. Therefore, for the time being, European Union legislation applies to the development of this policy and to decision making in relation to the preferred scheme.
- 1.25 The UK and EU negotiating teams reached agreement in March 2018 on the terms of a transition or implementation period that will start on 30 March 2019, when the UK formally ceases to be a member of the EU, and last until 31 December 2020. The agreed text states that “Union law shall be applicable to and in the United Kingdom during the transition period”. The limited exceptions to this are set out in the published text.
- 1.26 The Government has also introduced legislation to ensure that the UK exits the EU with maximum certainty and continuity. The EU Withdrawal Bill ends the supremacy of European Union (EU) law in UK law and converts EU law as it stands at the moment of exit into domestic law. The same rules and laws will apply on the day after exit as on the day before. It will then be for democratically elected representatives in the UK to decide on any changes to that law, after full scrutiny and proper debate.

Appraisal of Sustainability

- 1.27 An Appraisal of Sustainability is required by the Planning Act 2008 in relation to any NPS. An Appraisal of Sustainability, which describes the analysis of reasonable alternatives to the preferred scheme, has been carried out to inform the Airports NPS. The Appraisal of Sustainability informs the development of the Airports NPS by assessing the potential economic, social and environmental impacts of options to increase airport capacity.
- 1.28 The Appraisal of Sustainability also incorporates a strategic environmental assessment (pursuant to Directive 2001/42/EC as transposed by SI 2004/1633).¹⁷ The Appraisal of Sustainability was published alongside the Airports NPS.
- 1.29 The overall conclusions of the Appraisal of Sustainability show that (provided any scheme remains within the parameters and boundaries in this policy), whilst there will be inevitable harm caused by a new Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport in relation to some topics, the need for such a scheme, the obligation to mitigate such harm as far as possible, and the benefits that such a scheme will deliver, outweigh such harm. However, this is subject to the assessment of the effects of the preferred scheme, identification of suitable mitigation, and measures to secure and deliver the relevant mitigation.

¹⁷ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

- 1.30 The preferred scheme has been subject to further refinement by Heathrow Airport since the conclusion of the work of the Airports Commission. These refinements were not captured within the Airports Commission's appraisals and are not expected to significantly alter the key appraisal findings. The Government expects any applicant to carry out a further and more detailed study, and to secure appropriate mitigation measures, ahead of seeking development consent.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.31 The Airports NPS has also been assessed under the Habitats and Wild Birds Directive and Regulations.¹⁸ A Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken at a strategic level, and was published alongside the Airports NPS.
- 1.32 The strategic level Habitats Regulations Assessment, conducted in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010,¹⁹ concluded that the potential for the preferred scheme to have adverse effects on the integrity of European sites for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive could not be ruled out. This is because more detailed project design information and detailed proposals for mitigation are not presently available and inherent uncertainties exist at this stage. The Airports NPS has thus been considered in accordance with Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Consideration has been given to alternative solutions to the preferred scheme, and the conclusion has been reached that there are no alternatives that would deliver the objectives of the Airports NPS in relation to increasing airport capacity in the South East and maintaining the UK's hub status. In line with Article 6(4) of the Directive, the Government considers that meeting the overall needs case for increased capacity and maintaining the UK's hub status, as set out in chapter two, amount to imperative reasons of overriding public interest supporting its rationale for the designation of the Airports NPS. At detailed design stage, and in so far as it may be necessary, the matters set out in the Airports NPS will be relevant to determining whether there are alternative solutions and imperative reasons of overriding public interest, provided that the design remains consistent with the objectives of the Airports NPS.
- 1.33 Any development brought forward through an Airports NPS that was likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would be subject to a project-level Habitats Regulations Assessment at the detailed design stage. If it could not be concluded that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity, the project would not receive development consent on this basis, unless (a) there were no alternative solutions, (b) there were imperative reasons of overriding public interest in support, and (c) the necessary compensatory measures to protect the site were secured.

Equality Assessment

- 1.34 The Airports NPS has been informed by an Equality Assessment, which was published alongside the Airports NPS.
- 1.35 Under the Equality Act 2010, public bodies have a statutory duty to ensure race, disability and equality are considered in the exercise of their functions. The Equality

¹⁸ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna; and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds

¹⁹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukssi/2010/490/contents/made> Since the revised draft Airports National Policy Statement was published, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 have come into force

Assessment considered the potential equalities implications of airport expansion, including the effect on persons or groups of persons who share certain characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Assessment concludes that all of the shortlisted schemes will have effects on these groups, but that such effects can be managed and can ultimately be within appropriate limits. The Airports NPS requires that final impacts on affected groups should be the subject of a detailed review, carefully designed through engagement with the local community, and approved by the Secretary of State. It should be possible to fully or partially mitigate negative equalities impacts through good design, operations and mitigation plans.

Health Impact Analysis

- 1.36 The Airports NPS has been subject to a Health Impact Analysis, which was published alongside the Airports NPS.
- 1.37 The Health Impact Analysis identified impacts which would affect the population's health, including noise, air quality and socio-economic impacts. In order to be compliant with the Airports NPS, a further project level Health Impact Assessment is required. The application should include and propose health mitigation, which seeks to maximise the health benefits of the scheme and mitigate any negative health impacts.

Relationship between the Airports NPS and the Aviation Policy Framework

- 1.38 The Airports NPS sets out Government policy on expanding airport capacity in the South East of England, in particular by developing a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport. Any application for a new Northwest Runway development at Heathrow will be considered under the Airports NPS. Other Government policy on airport capacity has been set out in the Aviation Policy Framework, published in 2013.²⁰ The Airports NPS does not affect Government policy on wider aviation issues, for which the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework and any subsequent policy statements still apply.²¹
- 1.39 On 21 July 2017, the Government issued a call for evidence on a new Aviation Strategy.²² Having analysed the responses, the Government has confirmed that it is supportive of airports beyond Heathrow making best use of their existing runways. However, we recognise that the development of airports can have positive and negative impacts, including on noise levels. We consider that any proposals should be judged on their individual merits by the relevant planning authority, taking careful account of all relevant considerations, particularly economic and environmental impacts.

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/aviation-policy-framework>

²¹ This includes changes to the UK airspace policy published in the Government's response to the consultation, *UK Airspace policy: a framework for balanced decisions on the design and use of airspace*

²² *Beyond the Horizon: The Future of Aviation*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/636625/aviation-strategy-call-for-evidence.pdf - see paragraphs 7.19 to 7.21

Development covered by the Airports NPS

- 1.40 The Airports NPS has effect in relation to the delivery of additional airport capacity through the provision of a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport. It also applies to proposals for new terminal capacity located between the new Northwest Runway and the existing Northern Runway at Heathrow Airport, as well as the reconfiguration of terminal facilities in the area between the two existing runways at Heathrow Airport. Each of these elements is also capable of constituting a nationally significant infrastructure project.
- 1.41 The Airports NPS does not have effect in relation to an application for development consent for an airport development not comprised in an application relating to the Heathrow Northwest Runway, and proposals for new terminal capacity located between the Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport and the existing Northern Runway and reconfiguration of terminal facilities between the two existing runways at Heathrow Airport. Nevertheless, the Secretary of State considers that the contents of the Airports NPS will be both important and relevant considerations in the determination of such an application, particularly where it relates to London or the South East of England. Among the considerations that will be important and relevant are the findings in the Airports NPS as to the need for new airport capacity and that the preferred scheme is the most appropriate means of meeting that need.
- 1.42 As indicated in paragraph 1.39 above, airports wishing to make more intensive use of existing runways will still need to submit an application for planning permission or development consent to the relevant authority, which should be judged on the application's individual merits. However, in light of the findings of the Airports Commission on the need for more intensive use of existing infrastructure as described at paragraph 1.6 above, the Government accepts that it may well be possible for existing airports to demonstrate sufficient need for their proposals, additional to (or different from) the need which is met by the provision of a Northwest Runway at Heathrow. As indicated in paragraph 1.39 above, the Government's policy on this issue will continue to be considered in the context of developing a new Aviation Strategy.

2. The need for additional airport capacity

The importance of aviation to the UK economy

- 2.1 International connectivity, underpinned by strong airports and airlines, is important to the success of the UK economy. It is essential to allow domestic and foreign companies to access existing and new markets, and to help deliver trade and investment, linking us to valuable international markets and ensuring that the UK is open for business. It facilitates trade in goods and services, enables the movement of workers and tourists, and drives business innovation and investment, being particularly important for many of the fastest growing sectors of the economy.
- 2.2 International connectivity attracts businesses to cluster round airports, and helps to improve the productivity of the wider UK economy. Large and small UK businesses rely on air travel, while our airports are the primary gateway for vital time-sensitive freight services. Air travel also allows us ever greater freedom to travel and visit family and friends across the globe, and brings millions of people to the UK to do business or enjoy the best the country has to offer.
- 2.3 The UK benefits from a strong and substantially privatised airport sector, with a regulatory system that supports growth while ensuring the interests of passengers are at its heart. The Government believes that this is the right approach for the airport sector, but that Government has an important role to play in strategic decisions like planning future airport capacity.
- 2.4 The UK has the third largest aviation network in the world after the USA and China,²³ and London's airports serve more routes than any other European city.²⁴ The UK's airports handled over 268 million passengers in 2016, a 6.7% increase from the previous year.²⁵ The sector benefits the UK economy through its direct contribution to GDP and employment, and by facilitating trade and investment, manufacturing supply chains, skills development, and tourism.
- 2.5 In 2014 the UK aviation sector generated around £20 billion²⁶ of economic output, and directly employed around 230,000 workers,²⁷ supporting many more jobs indirectly. The UK has the second largest aircraft manufacturing industry in the world after the USA, and will benefit economically from growth in employment and exports from future aviation growth.²⁸ Air Passenger Duty remains an important contributor to Government revenue, raising over £3 billion in 2015/16.²⁹ Heathrow Airport directly supports around 75,000 jobs on site.³⁰

²³ *The Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015*, World Economic Forum, 2015, based on available airline seat kilometres

²⁴ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p55

²⁵ <https://www.caa.co.uk/Data-and-analysis/UK-aviation-market/Airports/Datasets/UK-Airport-data/Airport-data-2016/>

²⁶ ONS, Input-Output Supply and Use tables, 2014

²⁷ ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, 2014

²⁸ UK Aerospace Industry Survey, Aerospace, Defence, Security Trade Association, 2010

²⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691309/Feb18_Receipts_NS_Bulletin_Final.pdf

³⁰ <https://www.heathrowexpansion.com/local-community/local-benefits/>

- 2.6 Businesses from across the UK utilise our aviation network to access markets worldwide. The UK's strong services sector, which provides significant export earnings for the country, is particularly reliant on aviation. The sector includes, among others, financial services, insurance, creative industries, education, and health – all of which rely on face-to-face engagement with customers for success.
- 2.7 Air freight is also important to the UK economy. Although only a small proportion of UK trade by weight is carried by air, it is particularly important for supporting export-led growth in sectors where goods are of high value or time critical. Heathrow Airport is the UK's biggest freight port by value.³¹ Over £178 billion of air freight was sent between UK and non-European Union countries in 2016, representing over 45% of the UK's extra-European Union trade by value.³² This is especially important in the advanced manufacturing sector, where air freight is a key element of the time-critical supply chain. By 2030, advanced manufacturing industries such as pharmaceuticals or chemicals, whose components and products are predominantly moved by air, are expected to be among the top five UK export markets by their share of value.³³ In the future, UK manufacturing competitiveness and a successful and diverse UK economy will drive the need for quicker air freight.
- 2.8 Aviation also brings many wider benefits to society and individuals, including travel for leisure and visiting family and friends. This drives further economic activity. In 2013, for example, the direct gross value added of the tourism sector, one of the important beneficiaries of a strong UK aviation sector, was £59 billion.³⁴ Likewise, 2015 saw the value of inbound tourism rise to over £22 billion,³⁵ with the wider UK tourism industry forecast to grow significantly over the coming decades.
- 2.9 The importance of aviation to the UK economy, and in particular the UK's hub status, has only increased following the country's decision to leave the European Union. As the UK develops its new trading relationships with the rest of the world, it will be essential that increased airport capacity is delivered, in particular to support development of long haul routes to and from the UK, especially to emerging and developing economies.

The need for new airport capacity

- 2.10 However, challenges exist in the UK's aviation sector, stemming in particular from capacity constraints. These constraints are affecting our ability to travel conveniently and to a broader range of destinations than in the past. They create negative impacts on the UK through increased risk of flight delays and unreliability, restricted scope for competition and lower fares, declining domestic connectivity, erosion of the UK's hub status³⁶ relative to foreign competitors, and constraining the scope of the aviation sector to deliver wider economic benefits.
- 2.11 The UK now faces a significant capacity challenge. Heathrow Airport is currently the busiest two-runway airport in the world, while Gatwick Airport is the busiest single runway airport in the world. London's airports are filling up fast, and will all be full by the mid-2030s if we do not take action now.³⁷

³¹ <https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/BuildYourOwnTables/Pages/Home.aspx>

³² <https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/Pages/Statistics.aspx>

³³ HSBC Trade Forecast Tool, Accessed 2015

³⁴ Estimates of the Economic Importance of Tourism 2008-2013, Office for National Statistics, December 2014

³⁵ <https://www.visitbritain.org/2015-snapshot>. This figure represents tourism by all modes of transport. The equivalent figure for inbound tourists by air is £19 billion in 2015

³⁶ Defined as the frequency of flights and the density of a route network

³⁷ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p11

- 2.12 Aviation demand is likely to increase significantly between now and 2050.³⁸ All major airports in the South East of England³⁹ are expected to be full by the mid-2030s, with four out of five full by the mid-2020s. By 2050 demand at these airports is expected to outstrip capacity by at least 34%, even on the department's low demand forecast.⁴⁰ There is relatively little scope to redistribute demand away from the region to less heavily utilised capacity elsewhere in the country.⁴¹
- 2.13 The UK's hub status, stemming from the convenience and variety of its direct connections across the world, is already being challenged by restricted connectivity.⁴² Hub airports at Paris, Frankfurt and Amsterdam have spare capacity and are able to attract new flights to growth markets in China and South America.⁴³ These competitors have benefited from the capacity constraints at Heathrow Airport, and have seen faster growth over the past few years. The UK's airports also face growing competition from hubs in the Middle East like Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha and Istanbul. Heathrow Airport was overtaken by Dubai in 2015 as the world's busiest international passenger airport.⁴⁴
- 2.14 The consequences of not increasing airport capacity in the South East of England – the 'do nothing' or 'do minimum scenarios' – are detrimental to the UK economy and the UK's hub status. International connectivity will be restricted as capacity restrictions mean airlines prioritise their routes, seeking to maximise their profits. Capacity constraints therefore lead to trade-offs in destinations, and while there is scope to respond to changing demand patterns, this necessarily comes at the expense of other connections. Domestic connectivity into the largest London airports will also decline as competition for slots encourages airlines to prioritise more profitable routes.
- 2.15 Operating existing capacity at its limits means there will be little resilience to unforeseen disruptions, leading to delays. Fares are likely to rise as demand outstrips supply, and the lack of available slots makes it more difficult for new competitors to enter the market.
- 2.16 The Government believes that not increasing capacity will impose costs on passengers and on the wider economy. The Airports Commission estimated that direct negative impacts to passengers, such as fare increases and delays, would range from £21 billion to £23 billion over 60 years.⁴⁵ Without expansion, capacity constraints would impose increasing costs on the rest of the economy over time, lowering economic output by making aviation more expensive and less convenient to use, with knock-on effects in lost trade, tourism and foreign direct investment.
- 2.17 It is very challenging to put a precise figure on these impacts, but using alternative approaches the Airports Commission estimated these costs to be between £30 billion and £45 billion over 60 years.⁴⁶ The Airports Commission urged caution interpreting these figures, which overlap with the direct passenger costs reported above and so are not wholly additional. But they do illustrate that not increasing airport capacity carries real economic costs to the whole economy beyond aviation passengers. Having reviewed this further, the Government accepts this analysis and considers that

³⁸ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p8

³⁹ Defined as Gatwick, Heathrow, London City, Luton and Stansted

⁴⁰ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p11

⁴¹ *Airports Commission: Interim Report*, pp117-126

⁴² For more analysis on the UK's hub status, see *Airports Commission: Interim Report*, pp90-92

⁴³ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p249

⁴⁴ <http://www.aci.aero/News/Releases/Most-Recent/2016/09/09/Airports-Council-International-releases-2015-World-Airport-Traffic-Report-The-busiest-become-busier-the-year-of-the-international-hub-airport>

⁴⁵ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p81; present value over 60 years

⁴⁶ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p81

recent demand growth in the South East suggests an even greater possible cost if expansion is not undertaken.⁴⁷

- 2.18 The Government also acknowledges the local and national environmental impacts of airports and aviation, for example noise and emissions, and believes that capacity expansion should take place in a way that satisfactorily mitigates these impacts wherever possible. Expansion must be deliverable within national targets on greenhouse gas emissions and in accordance with legal obligations on air quality.

The Airports Commission

- 2.19 To address these issues, in September 2012, the Coalition Government established the independent Airports Commission, led by Sir Howard Davies. The Airports Commission had two objectives:

- To produce an Interim Report, setting out the nature, scale and timing of steps needed to maintain the UK's global hub status alongside recommendations for making better use of the UK's existing runway capacity over the next five years; and
- To produce a Final Report, setting out recommendations on how to meet any need for additional airport capacity in the longer term.⁴⁸

- 2.20 The Airports Commission was asked to take appropriate account of the national, regional and local implications of any expansion. As well as seven discussion papers and an appraisal framework, the Airports Commission delivered its recommendations to Government in its Interim Report in December 2013 and its Final Report in July 2015. It also published a summary and decision paper in September 2014 on whether to add an inner Thames Estuary airport proposal to a shortlist for further appraisal.⁴⁹

Alternatives to additional runway capacity

- 2.21 The Airports Commission explored potential alternatives to additional runway capacity, which included:

- Doing nothing;
- A 'do minimum' set of alternatives with very limited provision for additional capacity;
- Redistribution methods, for example changing the rate of Air Passenger Duty, changing slot allocation regimes, traffic distribution rules, and prohibiting certain types of flights;
- Investment in high speed rail and improved surface access options; and
- New technologies.⁵⁰

- 2.22 The Airports Commission found that none of these options delivered a sufficient increase in capacity, and that many required investment far in excess of the cost of runway expansion. However, the Airports Commission did note that the need to make best use of existing infrastructure would remain.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Updated Appraisal Report, p11

⁴⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission/about/terms-of-reference>

⁴⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inner-thames-estuary-airport-summary-and-decision>

⁵⁰ Airports Commission: Final Report, p84

⁵¹ Airports Commission: Final Report, paragraph 16.1 and 16.40

The Airports Commission's shortlisting process

- 2.23 The Airports Commission consulted widely on its appraisal framework, which contained its criteria for sifting proposed schemes,⁵² and the Government is satisfied that the appraisal framework was appropriate. The Airports Commission received 52 proposals, with three options developed by the Airports Commission itself. The Airports Commission took advice from a number of relevant stakeholders, including NATS Holdings, the Civil Aviation Authority, Network Rail, and the Highways Agency (as it then was). The Government believes that the Airports Commission has analysed all the options put forward to the appropriate degree of detail, and discounted non-shortlisted schemes fairly and objectively according to the sift criteria. The Government does not consider that any of the non-shortlisted schemes represents a reasonable alternative to its preferred scheme.
- 2.24 The three shortlisted schemes were:
- Gatwick Second Runway scheme;
 - Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme (which the Airports Commission recommended and is the Government's preferred scheme); and
 - Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme.
- 2.25 The Government has made clear in its announcement of 14 December 2015 that it agrees with the Airports Commission's three shortlisted schemes for expansion, and has taken forward its further work on this basis. As set out at paragraph 1.40 of this document, the Airports NPS will only have effect in relation to a scheme located at Heathrow Airport for the provision of a Northwest Runway, and not the other shortlisted schemes.

The Airports Commission's conclusions

- 2.26 In its Interim Report in December 2013,⁵³ the Airports Commission concluded that there was a need for one additional runway to be in operation in the South East of England by 2030. It also set in train a period of further consultation on three shortlisted schemes (Gatwick Second Runway scheme, Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, and Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme), as well as the option of a new airport in the inner Thames Estuary. In September 2014, the Airports Commission concluded that a new airport in the inner Thames Estuary did not perform sufficiently well to warrant consideration alongside the three schemes that it decided to shortlist.
- 2.27 In its Final Report in July 2015, the Airports Commission concluded that the proposed Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport presented the strongest case for expansion and would offer the greatest strategic and economic benefits to the UK. A copy of the illustrative Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme masterplan is included at Annex B. The Airports Commission also made clear that expansion would have to involve a significant package of supporting measures to address the environmental and community impacts of the new runway.
- 2.28 The Commission's remit also required it to look at how to make best use of existing airport infrastructure, before new capacity becomes operational.⁵⁴ The Commission noted in its final report that a new runway will not open for at least 10 years. It

⁵² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sift-criteria-for-long-term-capacity-options-at-uk-airports>

⁵³ *Airports Commission: Interim Report*, p11

⁵⁴ *Airports Commission: Interim Report*, paragraph 5.2

therefore considered it imperative that the UK continues to grow its domestic and international connectivity in this period, which it considered would require more intensive use of existing airports other than Heathrow and Gatwick.⁵⁵

The Government's work

- 2.29 The Government has reviewed the Airports Commission's work and the representations Government has received on the issue of airport capacity, and is confident that the Airports Commission's arguments and reasoning are clear and thorough.
- 2.30 The Airports Commission undertook an extensive appraisal over two and a half years, consulting widely and analysing all the evidence before making its final recommendations. Since then, the Government has reviewed the Airports Commission's work and concluded that its evidence base on the case for expansion and its use of this evidence are both sound.⁵⁶ This has given the Government the assurance required to use the evidence to inform its further work, which is set out in more detail later. The Government has therefore considered the Airports Commission data in great depth and also carried out its own further work, all of which informs the Airports NPS.
- 2.31 In coming to these decisions, the Government has fully considered the Airports Commission's Interim and Final Reports, as well as the inner Thames Estuary summary and decision paper. The Government also received a range of information from a variety of stakeholders in response to those reports, which was taken into account by the Government in reaching its preference.
- 2.32 Having reviewed the work of the Airports Commission and considered the evidence put forward on the issue of airport capacity, the Government believes that there is clear and strong evidence that there is a need to increase capacity in the South East of England by 2030 by constructing one new runway. The Government also agrees with the Airports Commission that this can be delivered within the UK's obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008.⁵⁷ The Government considers that following the country's decision to leave the European Union the country will increasingly look beyond Europe to the rest of the world, and so the importance of maintaining the UK's hub status, and in that context long haul connectivity in particular, has only increased.
- 2.33 The next chapter of the Airports NPS sets out how the Government has identified the most effective and appropriate way to address the overall need for increased airport capacity, and maintain the UK's hub status, while meeting air quality and carbon obligations and identifies that the Northwest Runway at Heathrow is the Government's preferred scheme.

⁵⁵ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, paragraph 16.40

⁵⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-further-review-and-sensitivities-report>

⁵⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-dft-review-of-the-airports-commissions-final-report> *Review of the Airports Commission Final Report*, p19

3. The Government's preferred scheme: Heathrow Northwest Runway

Overview

- 3.1 While the previous chapter of the Airports NPS sets out the Government's underlying policy and evidence on the need to expand airport capacity in the South East of England, this chapter sets out why the Government has stated its preference for the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme.
- 3.2 As set out in the previous chapter, the Airports Commission undertook a detailed shortlisting process, which resulted in three shortlisted schemes being considered by the Government for additional airport capacity:
- Gatwick Second Runway scheme;
 - Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme (which the Airports Commission recommended and is the Government's preferred scheme);
 - Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme.
- 3.3 The Government accepted the Airports Commission's three shortlisted schemes on 14 December 2015, agreeing with the Airports Commission's conclusion that one new runway in the South East of England by 2030 would be required to meet the need for additional capacity.
- 3.4 Following the publication of the Airports Commission's Final Report, the Government undertook further work on:
- Air quality;
 - Noise;
 - Carbon emissions; and
 - Impacts on local communities.
- 3.5 The Government has carried out additional sensitivities, which show the worst case scenarios on noise, carbon and the economy, within the Appraisal of Sustainability.
- 3.6 The work on air quality, which demonstrated that expansion (with mitigation) is capable of taking place within legal limits, is outlined in the Government's air quality re-analysis⁵⁸ and the Appraisal of Sustainability. Both documents contain a worst case scenario.
- 3.7 The Government agrees with the Airports Commission's assessment that a new runway is deliverable within the UK's climate change obligations.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-further-updated-air-quality-re-analysis>

⁵⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-dft-review-of-the-airports-commissions-final-report> *Review of the Airports Commission Final Report*, p19

- 3.8 Following engagement with all three shortlisted scheme promoters, the Government has recommended a package of community supporting measures.
- 3.9 The Government also carried out additional work in relation to surface access, and further economic analysis. This work has allowed the Government to consider carefully the effectiveness of each of the three schemes to meet the need for additional capacity.
- 3.10 The detailed results of this work can be found in a number of reports published by the Government on 25 October 2016:
- A formal review by the Department for Transport of the Airports Commission's Final Report;⁶⁰
 - An air quality re-analysis to test the Airports Commission's work against the Government's air quality plan;⁶¹
 - A further review of the Airports Commission's analytical approach, providing greater assurance in those areas where needed;⁶²
 - A comparison of the originally shortlisted schemes' compensation packages against other expansion projects around the world;⁶³
 - An assurance report by Highways England on the schemes' road surface access proposals;⁶⁴ and
 - A non-binding statement of principles between Heathrow Airport and the Secretary of State for Transport on the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme.⁶⁵
- 3.11 On 25 October 2016, the Government announced that its preferred scheme to meet the need for new airport capacity in the South East of England was a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport.⁶⁶ It also confirmed that this would be included in a draft Airports NPS, which would be subject to consultation in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Planning Act 2008.
- 3.12 The draft Airports NPS and supporting Appraisal of Sustainability were published on 2 February 2017 and a 16 week public consultation was launched. On publishing the draft Airports NPS, the Government made a commitment to continue updating its evidence base on airport capacity, including revised passenger demand forecasts and the impact of the publication of the final Air Quality Plan (the UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations). On 24 October 2017, the Government published and conducted an 8 week public consultation on a revised draft Airports NPS and other documents which were published alongside it. The revisions were made on the basis of changes to the evidence base and as a result of initial consideration of the responses to the February consultation and other broader government policy changes. Having considered the responses to both the February and October consultations, and the report published by the Transport Committee on 23 March 2018, the Government has made some further changes, principally to provide greater clarity and reflect updates to wider Government policies. The Government believes that the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, of all the three shortlisted schemes, is the most effective and most appropriate way of meeting the

⁶⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-dft-review-of-the-airports-commissions-final-report>

⁶¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-further-analysis-of-air-quality-data>

⁶² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-further-review-and-sensitivities-report>

⁶³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-global-comparison-of-airport-mitigation-measures>

⁶⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-highways-england-assurance-report>

⁶⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heathrow-airport-limited-statement-of-principles>

⁶⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/airport-capacity>

needs case set out in chapter 2. As such, the Government has also concluded that the other shortlisted schemes do not represent true alternatives to the preferred scheme.

- 3.13 The remainder of this chapter is broken down into two distinct sections. The first section focuses on why the Government prefers the Heathrow Northwest Runway Scheme to the Gatwick Second Runway scheme in terms of delivering additional airport capacity by 2030. The second section focuses on why the Government prefers the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme to the Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme.
- 3.14 Increasing airport capacity in the South East of England and maintaining the UK's hub status can be expected to result in both positive and negative impacts, as would be the case for any major infrastructure project. Important positive impacts are expected to include better international connectivity and providing benefits to passengers and the UK economy as a whole (for example for the freight industry). The negative impacts are expected to include environmental impacts, for example on air quality and affected local communities.
- 3.15 In its considerations on a preferred scheme, the Government has fully taken into account the work of the Airports Commission, information provided by a variety of stakeholders, and the results of the Government's further work outlined in paragraphs 3.4-3.10 above. As set out below, the Government has considered the positive and negative effects from each of the three shortlisted schemes, and reached its conclusion by weighing these expected effects, along with considering how positive effects can be enhanced and negative effects mitigated.

Heathrow Northwest Runway and Gatwick Second Runway

- 3.16 In identifying the preferred scheme, a wide range of factors has been taken into account, including:
- International connectivity and strategic benefits;
 - Passenger and wider economic benefits;
 - Domestic connectivity and regional impacts;
 - Surface access links;
 - Views of airlines, regional airports and the business community;
 - Financeability;
 - Deliverability; and
 - Local environmental impacts.
- 3.17 While the Government acknowledges the differences between the three shortlisted schemes, carbon impacts (unlike the factors above) have not been considered as a differentiating factor between schemes due to the Airports Commission's overarching assessment that all three are deliverable within the UK's climate change obligations.

International connectivity and strategic benefits, including freight

- 3.18 Heathrow Airport is best placed to address this need by providing the biggest boost to the UK's international connectivity. Heathrow Airport is one of the world's major hub airports, serving around 180 destinations worldwide with at least a weekly service,

including a diverse network of onward flights across the UK and Europe.⁶⁷ Building on this base, expansion at Heathrow Airport will mean it will continue to attract a growing number of transfer passengers, providing the added demand to make more routes viable. In particular, this is expected to lead to more long haul flights and connections to fast-growing economies, helping to secure the UK's status as a global aviation hub, and enabling it to play a crucial role in the global economy.

- 3.19 By contrast, expansion at Gatwick Airport would not enhance, and would consequently threaten, the UK's global aviation hub status. Gatwick Airport would largely remain a point to point airport, attracting very few transfer passengers. Heathrow Airport would continue to be constrained, outcompeted by competitor hubs which lure away transfer passengers, further weakening the range and frequency of viable routes. At the UK level, there would be significantly fewer long haul flights in comparison to the preferred scheme, with long haul destinations served less frequently. Expansion at Heathrow Airport is the better option to ensure the number of services on existing routes increases and allows airlines to offer more frequent new routes to vital emerging markets.
- 3.20 This was demonstrated by the forecasts produced by the Airports Commission, and continues to be found in the department's 2017 forecasts.⁶⁸ Compared to no expansion, the Government estimate that a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport by 2040 would result in 113,000 additional flights a year across the UK as a whole (including 43,000 long haul), and 28 million additional passengers a year. By way of comparison, the Heathrow Extended Northern Runway would add 85,000 more flights and 22 million additional passengers.⁶⁹ ⁷⁰
- 3.21 Compared to no expansion, the Second Runway scheme at Gatwick would add 15,000 flights and 10 million passengers by 2040, across the UK as a whole, increasing to 77,000 and 23 million respectively in 2050. The Government project that 8,000 of these additional flights would be long haul in 2040, rising to 17,000 in 2050.⁷¹ Gatwick Airport has recently been successful in securing a number of long haul routes to the USA and Canada from low cost carriers, a new market segment.
- 3.22 As set out above, the ease with which businesses can move staff around the globe is an important facilitator of trade and for businesses locating and remaining in the UK. The broader range and greater frequency of long haul flights at Heathrow Airport best meets this need. It would deliver benefits for UK passengers (both business and leisure) by allowing them to travel to more destinations flexibly. These benefits include the additional frequency of flights, for example connecting the UK to long haul destinations daily instead of weekly, or several times a day instead of daily. Businesses from across the UK currently take advantage of Heathrow Airport's international connections, and will continue to benefit from these following expansion. In particular, the additional capacity delivered at Heathrow Airport will support growth

⁶⁷ CAA, 2016

⁶⁸ An important uncertainty to the central estimates concerns the forecasts of future aviation demand and allocation across UK airports. The Airports Commission reflected this uncertainty using five demand scenarios, as well as two carbon policy regimes. The Department for Transport has further considered uncertainty through the use of low, central and high demand scenarios. Further uncertainty arises from the choice of individual modelling assumptions. More information on the Airports Commission's scenarios and sensitivity analysis, can be found in the *Further Review and Sensitivities Report*. More information on the department's 2017 scenarios and sensitivity analysis can be found in the Updated Appraisal Report

⁶⁹ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p14 and 17. This number includes all point to point and transfer passengers at UK airports, and refers to terminal passengers who are counted each time they land or take off at a UK airport. Further disaggregation is provided in the Updated Appraisal Report

⁷⁰ Due to the expected use of larger planes with higher load factors, the department's 2017 forecasts find smaller increases in ATMs are needed to deliver similar increases in passenger numbers. This is particularly evident for Gatwick, where load factors have increased notably over the past few years. Further information is provided in the Updated Appraisal Report

⁷¹ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p 14 and 17

in important sectors of the UK economy, including tourism, financial services, and the creative industries.

- 3.23 The aviation sector can also boost the wider economy by providing more opportunities for trade through air freight. The time-sensitive air freight industry, and those industries that use air freight, benefit from greater quantity and frequency of services, especially long haul. By providing more space for cargo, lowering costs, and by the greater frequency of services, this should in turn provide a boost to trade and GDP benefits.⁷²
- 3.24 As set out above, expansion at Heathrow Airport delivers the biggest boost in long haul flights, and the greatest benefit therefore to air freight. This is further facilitated by the existing and proposed airport development of freight facilities as part of the Northwest Runway scheme. Heathrow Airport currently has a substantial freight handling operation, around 20 times larger by tonnage⁷³ than that at Gatwick Airport, and accounting for 34% of the UK's non-European Union trade by value – around 170 times more than Gatwick Airport.⁷⁴ Expansion at Heathrow Airport will further strengthen the connections of firms from across the UK to international markets.

Passenger and wider economic benefits

- 3.25 Without expansion, passengers and other users of airports are likely to suffer from higher fares and more delays. High demand for air travel at airports with limited or no scope for increased capacity could weaken competition, allowing airlines to charge higher fares. As airports fill up and operate at full capacity, there is little resilience to deal with any disruption, leading to delays.
- 3.26 Expansion via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme is best placed to address this need. Heathrow Airport is currently the busiest two runway airport in the world, already operating at full capacity, with substantial pent up demand from passengers and airlines. Expansion at Heathrow Airport would increase the availability of services, and increase competition between airlines. This would lower fares that passengers can expect to face relative to no expansion, leading to significant benefits to business and leisure passengers and the wider economy. Crucially, the extent of the pent up demand at Heathrow Airport means that these benefits will be experienced more rapidly once the new capacity is operational, with both Heathrow schemes providing more passenger benefits by 2050 than the Gatwick Second Runway scheme, and with total benefits (not including wider trade benefits) of up to £74 billion over 60 years for the Northwest Runway scheme.⁷⁵ ⁷⁶ These benefits are expected to be realised by passengers across the UK as they make use of the additional services provided by the expanded airport. Cumulative benefits delivered by a Northwest Runway scheme remain highest throughout most of the appraisal period, until the mid-2070s, although total benefits are slightly lower than would be delivered by Gatwick expansion over the full 60 year assessment.⁷⁷
- 3.27 The Government also recognises the role airports can play in supporting wider economic growth in the local community. Expansion at Heathrow Airport is expected to result in larger benefits to the wider economy than expansion at Gatwick Airport. These additional benefits come from workers moving to more productive jobs around the expanded airport as well as the productivity benefits from firms who will enjoy lower aviation transport costs. Heathrow Airport already has a more developed cluster

⁷² Updated Appraisal Report, p16

⁷³ <https://www.caa.co.uk/Data-and-analysis/UK-aviation-market/Airports/Datasets/UK-airport-data/Airport-data-2016/>

⁷⁴ HMRC, 2016, <https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/BuildYourOwnTables/Pages/Home.aspx>

⁷⁵ For clarity of presentation, only the central demand scenario estimate is presented here. This value is the same for the department's carbon-traded and carbon-capped scenarios – see the Updated Appraisal Report for further details

⁷⁶ This includes passenger benefits to UK residents, non-UK residents and international-to-international interliners

⁷⁷ Updated Appraisal Report, p45

of businesses in its surrounding area, which should enable an even larger economic boost from expansion in the local economy.⁷⁸

- 3.28 Expansion via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme should deliver additional jobs at the airport, through its supply chain and in the local community. The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme is expected to generate up to 114,000 additional jobs in the local area by 2030,⁷⁹ with Heathrow Airport also pledging to provide 5,000 additional apprenticeships by this time. The number of local jobs created at an expanded Heathrow Airport is predicted to be much greater than at Gatwick Airport (up to 21,000 by 2030 and 60,000 by 2050),⁸⁰ and the jobs would also be created more quickly. The numbers are higher at Heathrow Airport because the additional capacity is forecast to be used more quickly following expansion and, importantly, because the types of services offered at an expanded Heathrow Airport are likely to be more complex, particularly with the greater number of full service airlines operating there.
- 3.29 Expansion brings a wide set of non-monetised benefits such as local job creation, trade, and freight benefits, which indicate a stronger case for a Heathrow scheme than for the Gatwick Second Runway scheme.⁸¹

Domestic connectivity

- 3.30 The Government recognises the importance that the nations and regions of the UK attach to domestic connectivity, particularly connections into Heathrow Airport. Airports across the UK provide a vital contribution to the economic wellbeing of the whole of the UK. Without expansion, there is a risk that, as airlines react to limited capacity, they could prioritise routes away from domestic connections. The Government therefore sees expansion at Heathrow Airport as an opportunity to not only protect and strengthen the frequency of existing domestic routes, but to secure new domestic routes to the benefit of passengers and businesses across the UK.
- 3.31 Passengers from across the UK are likely to benefit from the improved international connectivity provided by expansion. In 2040, 5.9 million additional passengers from outside of London and the South East are forecast to make one way international journeys⁸² from Heathrow Airport. Under a Gatwick Second Runway scheme, 3.8 million additional passengers from outside London and the South East would be forecast to make one way international journeys from Gatwick Airport in 2040. By way of comparison, under a Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme, 4.6 million additional passengers from outside London and the South East would be forecast to make one way international journeys from Heathrow Airport in 2040. While expansion will also see some displacement of passengers from regional airports to the London system, overall regional airports are expected to continue displaying strong growth in passenger numbers by 2050.⁸³
- 3.32 An expanded Heathrow Airport should therefore mean that more passengers from across the UK are likely to benefit from lower fares and access to important international markets from the airport.
- 3.33 The Government expects to see expansion at Heathrow Airport driving an increase in the number of UK airports with connections specifically into the airport. Heathrow

⁷⁸ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p27

⁷⁹ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p29

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p42

⁸² Defined as any passenger who travels to (or from) an international destination from a region outside of London and the South East, and uses the expanded airport as part of this journey. A one-way journey is counted as either an outbound or an inbound journey. Return passengers are therefore counted twice.

⁸³ *Updated Appraisal Report*, p20

Airport and Gatwick Airport set out plans on domestic connectivity which they say they could deliver by 2030:

- at least 14 domestic routes for Heathrow Airport, compared to the eight routes currently in operation; and
- at least 12 domestic routes for Gatwick Airport, compared to the six currently offered.⁸⁴

The following table provides examples of potential domestic routes:⁸⁵

Heathrow Airport under expansion in 2030 ⁸⁶	Gatwick Airport under expansion in 2030
<p>8 domestic routes operating today (Aberdeen, Belfast City, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Leeds Bradford, Manchester, Newcastle)</p> <p>plus Belfast International, Durham Tees Valley, Humberside, Liverpool, Newquay, Prestwick</p> <p>Total: 14</p>	<p>6 domestic routes operating today (Aberdeen, Belfast International, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Newquay)</p> <p>plus Belfast City, Derry-Londonderry, Dundee, Leeds Bradford, Manchester, Newcastle</p> <p>Total: 12</p>

Government expectation on domestic connectivity

3.34 The Government recognises that air routes are in the first instance a commercial decision for airlines and are not in the gift of an airport operator. But the Government is determined that new routes will be secured, and will hold Heathrow Airport to account on this. The Government requires Heathrow Airport to demonstrate it has worked constructively with its airline customers to protect and strengthen existing domestic routes, and to develop new domestic connections, including to regions currently unserved.

Surface access links

3.35 To realise the benefits of expansion, passengers and users must have good access to the airport. On this basis Heathrow Airport has the advantage, because of its more accessible location and more varied surface access links.

3.36 Heathrow Airport already has good surface transport links to the rest of the UK. It enjoys road links via the M25, M4, M40 and M3, and rail links via the London Underground Piccadilly Line, Heathrow Connect, and Heathrow Express. In the future, it will connect to Crossrail, and link to HS2 at Old Oak Common. Plans are being developed for improved rail access: the proposed Western Rail Access could link the airport to the Great Western Main Line, and Southern Rail Access could join routes to the South Western Railway network and London Waterloo Station. This varied choice of road and rail connections makes Heathrow Airport accessible to both passengers

⁸⁴ The DfT 2017 aviation forecasts do not take account of the ability of airport levers to strengthen specific routes. Domestic routes proposed by promoters are therefore not included in the updated forecasts

⁸⁵ Table excludes UK Crown Dependencies

⁸⁶ Taken from promoter plans for domestic connections at Heathrow Airport and Gatwick Airport, compared to existing domestic connections at both airports. The Government would expect Heathrow Airport's plan to be broadly equivalent for the Extended Northern Runway proposal if it was taken forward

and freight operators in much of the UK, and provides significant resilience to any disruption.

- 3.37 Access to Gatwick relies on the M23 and the Brighton Main Line, which means it serves London well but makes it less convenient for onward travel to the rest of the UK. It is also less resilient than Heathrow Airport. Heathrow Airport has advantages over Gatwick Airport with its greater integration into the national transport network, benefitting both passengers and freight operators. It also currently has significantly larger freight operations than Gatwick Airport, around 20 times larger in terms of total tonnage⁸⁷ and around 170 times larger in terms of value.⁸⁸
- 3.38 The airport scheme promoters have pledged to meet the cost of surface access schemes required to enable a runway to open. For Gatwick Airport, this covers the full cost of the works (including the M23 and A23) needed to support expansion. The two Heathrow schemes would pay for the full cost of M25, A4 and A3044 works, as well as other local road works. They would make a contribution towards the cost of the proposed Western Rail Access and Southern Rail Access schemes. Improvements which are already underway, such as Thameslink and Crossrail, will be completed, and the Government has not assumed any change to these schemes' existing funding.
- 3.39 The majority of the surface access costs where a split of beneficiaries is expected (for example, where multiple businesses and the public at large benefit from a new road junction or rail scheme) are likely to be borne by Government, where the schemes provide greater benefits for non-airport users. The airport contribution would be subject to a negotiation, and review by regulators.
- 3.40 Because of the early stages of development, there is some variability of surface access costs, which are subject to more detailed development and, for example, choices over precise routes. The additional public expenditure effects of the options would likely be as follows:
- For both Heathrow proposals, there is no Government road spend directly linked to expansion; the promoter would pay for changes to the M25, A4 and A3044 and any local roads. The Western and Southern Rail schemes are at different levels of development and the cost estimates will change as these schemes are developed. The Government would expect the costs of the schemes to be partly offset by airport contributions, which would be negotiated when the schemes reach an appropriate level of development.
 - For the Gatwick proposal, there would be no additional public expenditure solely because of expansion, as all road enhancement costs for airport expansion would be met by the scheme promoter. The Government has assumed that any improvements to the Brighton Main Line that may be required would take place regardless of expansion and would be publicly funded.

Views and support of airlines, regional airports and the business community

- 3.41 The benefits of expansion will be delivered only if airlines and the industry choose to use the new capacity, and pay for it via airport charges. There is much greater airline support for expansion via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme than the other two schemes, subject to various concerns being met, for example on costs.
- 3.42 The majority of regional airports who have stated a public preference support expanding Heathrow Airport, on the basis of its current status as the UK's hub (though

⁸⁷ <https://www.caa.co.uk/Data-and-analysis/UK-aviation-market/Airports/Datasets/UK-airport-data/Airport-data-2016/>

⁸⁸ <https://www.uktradeinfo.com/Statistics/BuildYourOwnTables/Pages/Home.aspx>

Birmingham Airport has supported expansion at Gatwick Airport). This support is driven by airports' considerations on connectivity and other commercial issues.

- 3.43 Expansion is critical for business confidence in the UK. The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme has strong support from the wider business community across the whole of the UK, including from the Confederation of British Industry,⁸⁹ the British Chambers of Commerce,⁹⁰ the Federation of Small Businesses,⁹¹ the manufacturers' organisation EEF,⁹² and regional business groups across the UK. 61% of the directors asked by the Institute of Directors stated that their preference was for expansion at Heathrow Airport, compared to 39% who favoured expansion at Gatwick Airport.⁹³

Financeability

- 3.44 While the Gatwick Second Runway scheme would be significantly cheaper than the two schemes at Heathrow, with the Heathrow Northwest Runway the most expensive of the three shortlisted schemes, all three are private sector schemes which the Government believes could be financeable without Government support.⁹⁴
- 3.45 The level of debt and equity required for the Gatwick Second Runway scheme would be significantly lower than for the Heathrow schemes, but the Airports Commission noted that the Gatwick Second Runway scheme would have comparatively higher demand risk, which is harder for Government to mitigate compared to the Heathrow schemes.⁹⁵ Both Heathrow schemes build on a strong track record of proven demand that has proven resistant to economic downturns. Independent financial advisers have undertaken further work for the Government, and agree that all three schemes are financeable without Government support.

Deliverability and safety

- 3.46 The three shortlisted schemes involve different levels of delivery risk. Gatwick Airport said its Second Runway scheme is capable of being delivered by 2025, while Heathrow Airport said its Northwest Runway scheme is capable of being delivered by 2026. The Gatwick Second Runway scheme would be much simpler to build. The process for delivering powers for the Heathrow schemes will be more complex because the schemes themselves are more complex. The delivery dates for both Heathrow schemes are therefore likely to be more risky than that for the scheme at Gatwick.
- 3.47 The Airports Commission worked with the Civil Aviation Authority and NATS Holdings to review the operational and airspace implications of all three shortlisted schemes, including conducting fast-time simulation modelling of the proposed airspace routes. This work concluded that, while safely managing the expected increase in air traffic for any scheme will be challenging, it should nevertheless be achievable given modernisation of airspace in the South East of England and taking advantage of new technologies – changes which will be necessary with or without expansion.
- 3.48 The Airports Commission also asked the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) to review the scale of increase in crash risk associated with each of the schemes. This review considered two risks: the background risk, which accounts for aircraft cruising in UK airspace, and an airfield crash rate, relating to aircraft taking off and landing at a

⁸⁹ <http://mediacentre.heathrow.com/pressrelease/details/81/Expansion-News-23/4789>

⁹⁰ <http://www.britishchambers.org.uk/press-office/press-releases/bcc-while-britain-dithers-on-aviation,-others-do.html>

⁹¹ <https://www.fsb.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/heathrow-s-third-runway-sends-clear-signal-britain-is-open-for-business>

⁹² <https://www.eef.org.uk/about-eef/media-news-and-insights/media-releases/2016/oct/eef-comment-on-heathrow-expansion>

⁹³ <https://www.iod.com/news-campaigns/news/articles/Business-leaders-welcome-Airports-Commission-recommendations>

⁹⁴ The Airports Commission estimated capital costs at £9 billion for the Gatwick Second Runway scheme, £14.4 billion for the Heathrow Extended Northern Runway Scheme, and £17.6 billion for the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, not including surface access costs

⁹⁵ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p270

specific airfield.⁹⁶ This review concluded that “the changes to the background crash risk are minimal regardless of whether or not expansion takes place at the airports.”⁹⁷ In addition the increase in airfield crash risks for both airports was proportionate to the additional number of flights anticipated, meaning that the “scenario for Heathrow with the highest crash rates represents an increase of 60% in the crash rate compared to 2013. At Gatwick Airport, the crash rate is more than doubled in the scenario with the highest rates.”⁹⁸ As noted by HSL, “there is a high level of uncertainty in the calculated crash rates” due to the limited number of previous incidents to assess. Of the over 36 million aircraft movements examined by HSL that are of relevance to either Heathrow or Gatwick’s airfield crash risk, only three resulted in accidents.⁹⁹ The Civil Aviation Authority conducted a preliminary safety assessment of the schemes and concluded that the schemes were feasible in principle from a safety perspective.¹⁰⁰

Local environmental, health and community impacts

- 3.49 Decisions on airport capacity must rightly balance local, environmental and social considerations against the national and local benefits stemming from expansion. As set out above, in terms of economic and strategic benefits, expansion via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme best meets the need for additional capacity in the South East of England. However, set against these positive impacts, airport expansion can also have negative impacts. For example, all three schemes will have significant impacts on the environment and local communities.
- 3.50 The Appraisal of Sustainability presents an assessment of the likely environmental, social and economic impacts of all three schemes. The Health Impact Analysis also presents an assessment of the health impacts. The following discussion of assessments of the three schemes considers the impacts of expansion without the benefits of the mitigation package put forward by scheme promoters or required by the Government under this NPS. The *Updated Appraisal Report* monetises, where possible, the air quality, noise and carbon impacts affecting people from each of the three schemes. These monetised values are small relative to the size of the monetised economic benefits of each scheme over the 60-year appraisal period. The Appraisal of Sustainability shows that, while all three schemes are expected to lead to a reduction in air quality and increased noise (without consideration of potential mitigations of the three schemes), the Gatwick Second Runway scheme would have a lower level of adverse effects relating to noise and air quality than either scheme at Heathrow. All three schemes will have an impact on the natural environment, including biodiversity, water and landscape. Negative effects upon quality of life, health and amenity were assessed, when unmitigated, to be of a greater magnitude for the two Heathrow expansion schemes and of a lower magnitude for the Gatwick Second Runway scheme. This is primarily because Gatwick Airport is in a more rural location, with fewer people impacted by the airport. The Appraisal of Sustainability also outlines measures to mitigate these local impacts to ensure that legal obligations will be met.

⁹⁶ *Operational Efficiency: Ground Risk Analysis*, Health and Safety Laboratory, p3
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437269/operational-efficiency-ground-risk-analysis.pdf

⁹⁷ *Operational Efficiency: Ground Risk Analysis*, Health and Safety Laboratory, pvi
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437269/operational-efficiency-ground-risk-analysis.pdf

⁹⁸ *Operational Efficiency: Ground Risk Analysis*, Health and Safety Laboratory, p15
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437269/operational-efficiency-ground-risk-analysis.pdf

⁹⁹ *Operational Efficiency: Ground Risk Analysis*, Health and Safety Laboratory, p9
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437269/operational-efficiency-ground-risk-analysis.pdf

¹⁰⁰ *Airports Commission: Final report*, p243

As set out below, the Government believes this demonstrates how the commitment to ensure that local impacts of expansion will be mitigated satisfactorily can be met.

- 3.51 Heathrow Airport has committed to ensuring its landside airport-related traffic is no greater than today. The airport will be expected to achieve a public transport mode share of at least 50% by 2030, and at least 55% by 2040, for passengers.
- 3.52 The Government agrees with the evidence set out by the Airports Commission that expansion at Heathrow Airport is consistent with the UK's climate change obligations.¹⁰¹
- 3.53 The Appraisal of Sustainability identifies that, in addition to changes due to local noise and air quality impacts, communities may be affected by airport expansion through loss of, and/or additional demand for housing, community facilities or services, including recreational facilities. In addition, there will be effects on parks, open spaces and the historic environment, which will affect the quality of life of local communities which benefit from access to these facilities and features. These effects will be of a higher magnitude for the two Heathrow expansion schemes and a lower magnitude for Gatwick Second Runway. Overall, each of the three schemes is expected to have negative impacts on local communities, with more severe impacts expected from the Heathrow schemes. Impacts of all three schemes will not be felt equally across social groups. Equality impacts are set out in chapter four.
- 3.54 The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme will be accompanied by a package of measures to mitigate the impact of airport expansion on the environment and affected communities.¹⁰² The Government agrees with the Airports Commission's conclusion that "to make expansion possible...a comprehensive package of accompanying measures [should be recommended to] make the airport's expansion more acceptable to its local community, and to Londoners generally".¹⁰³ This is expected to include a highly valued scheduled night flight ban of six and a half hours between 11pm and 7am (with the exact start and finish times to be determined following consultation), and the offer of a predictable, though reduced, period of respite for local communities.
- 3.55 To mitigate environmental and social impacts, Heathrow Airport and Gatwick Airport both announced compensation packages (covering residential property acquisition, noise insulation, and other community measures like funding for schools), of more than £1 billion at Heathrow Airport and more than £200 million at Gatwick Airport (over 15-20 years from 2020). Heathrow Airport's package reflects the much greater number of people affected in the local area.

Heathrow Northwest Runway and Heathrow Extended Northern Runway

- 3.56 The Heathrow Extended Northern runway scheme has two advantages over the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme: lower capital costs (£14.4 billion for the Extended Northern Runway scheme compared to £17.6 billion for the Northwest Runway scheme), and significantly fewer houses being demolished (242 rather than 783), as well as avoiding impacts on a number of commercial properties.

¹⁰¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-dft-review-of-the-airports-commissions-final-report> *Review of the Airports Commission Final Report*, p19

¹⁰² By way of comparison, the Government engaged Ernst & Young to prepare a report on the approaches taken by other international airports in addressing the local impacts of the airport - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/airport-expansion-global-comparison-of-airport-mitigation-measures>

¹⁰³ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p4

- 3.57 However, the Government made a preference for the Heathrow Northwest Runway based on a number of factors:
- Resilience;
 - Respite from noise for local communities; and
 - Deliverability.
- 3.58 The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme would provide respite by altering the pattern of arrivals and departures across the runways over the course of the day to give communities breaks from noise. However, respite would decrease from one half to one third of the day. The Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme has much less potential for respite. It would use both runways for arrivals and departures for most of the day, although it may be able to ‘switch off’ one runway for a short time during non-peak periods with a corresponding reduction in capacity.¹⁰⁴
- 3.59 The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme should provide greater resilience than the Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme because of the way the three separate runways could operate more flexibly when needed to reduce delays, and the less congested airfield. It delivers greater capacity (estimated on a like for like basis by the Airports Commission at 740,000 flights departing and arriving per annum compared to the Extended Northern Runway scheme at 700,000),¹⁰⁵ accordingly higher economic benefits, and a broader route network. It also provides greater space for commercial development, which could be used to enhance onsite freight capacity.
- 3.60 The Airports Commission assessed the Heathrow Extended Northern Runway scheme to be deliverable.¹⁰⁶ However, the Extended Northern Runway scheme has no direct global precedent. As such, there is greater uncertainty as to what measures may be required to ensure that the airport can operate safely, and what the impact of those measures may be, including the restriction on runway capacity.

Carbon emissions

- 3.61 Although not a differentiating factor between the three shortlisted schemes, the Government has considered the issue of carbon emissions, given the Government’s commitment to tackle climate change, and its legal obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008.
- 3.62 The Airports Commission identified carbon impacts from expansion in four areas: a net increase in air travel; airside ground movements and airport operations; changes in travel patterns as a result of the scheme’s surface access arrangements; and construction of new infrastructure. Emissions from air travel, specifically international flights, are by far the largest of these impacts.¹⁰⁷
- 3.63 To address uncertainties over the future policy treatment of international aviation emissions,¹⁰⁸ the Airports Commission used two carbon policy scenarios in its analysis.
- 3.64 The first was a ‘carbon capped’ scenario, in which emissions from the UK aviation sector are limited to the Committee on Climate Change’s planning assumption for the

¹⁰⁴ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, pp180-184

¹⁰⁵ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p29

¹⁰⁶ *Airports Commission: Final Report*, p236

¹⁰⁷ Intra-UK flights account for approximately 6% of the total emissions from all flights departing UK airports. These emissions are included in the UK’s carbon budgets

¹⁰⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/186683/aviation-and-climate-change-paper.pdf *Airports Commission: discussion paper 03: aviation and climate change*, pp12-16

sector of 37.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2050. The second was a 'carbon traded' scenario, in which emissions are traded as part of a global carbon market, allowing reductions to be made where they are most efficient across the global economy.

- 3.65 The Airports Commission then assessed whether the needs case could be met under each of these scenarios, that is whether expansion would still deliver the necessary improvements and provide benefits to passengers and the wider economy. The Government has updated this analysis to take account of the latest passenger demand forecasts.
- 3.66 This further analysis reinforces the conclusion that any one of the three shortlisted schemes could be delivered within the UK's climate change obligations, as well as showing that a mix of policy measures and technologies could be employed to meet the Committee of Climate Change's planning assumption.¹⁰⁹
- 3.67 Of the three shortlisted schemes, the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme produces the highest carbon emissions in absolute terms. However, this is in part due to the greater additional connectivity provided by the scheme, and, in relation to the increase in emissions caused by expansion under any of the schemes, the differences between the schemes are small. Both of the carbon policy scenarios incorporated measures to ensure that the increased emissions from any of the shortlisted schemes were not additional overall either at the global level (in the carbon traded case) or at the UK level (in the carbon capped case).
- 3.68 The further analysis also shows that, in both carbon policy scenarios, the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme would deliver significant benefits to passengers and the wider economy (such as lower fares, improved frequency and higher productivity), and would do so more quickly than the Gatwick Second Runway scheme. Both Heathrow schemes provide more passenger benefits by 2050 than the Gatwick Second Runway scheme.
- 3.69 The Government has considered this further analysis, and concludes both that expansion via a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport (as its preferred scheme) can be delivered within the UK's carbon obligations, and that the scheme is the right choice on economic and strategic grounds regardless of the future regime to deal with emissions from international aviation.¹¹⁰

Strategic environmental assessment

- 3.70 Strategic environmental assessments are required by the law. A strategic environmental assessment is set out in full in the Appraisal of Sustainability.¹¹¹ It demonstrates that airport expansion will attract additional air traffic, which impacts upon quality of life and wellbeing, in particular through noise, air quality, housing, community facilities, and access to nature and cultural heritage. Negative impacts upon quality of life were of a greater scale within the two Heathrow schemes and of lower magnitude for the Gatwick Second Runway scheme. However, when assessing against the objective of maximising economic benefits and improving competitiveness and employment, the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme generates the most benefits, as well as producing the highest direct benefits to passengers.

¹⁰⁹ Updated Appraisal Report, p36

¹¹⁰ Updated Appraisal Report, p35 and p42

¹¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appraisal-of-sustainability-for-the-revised-draft-airports-national-policy-statement>

Conclusion

- 3.71 This section summarises the factors the Government considered when evaluating each of the three schemes shortlisted by the Airports Commission against the needs case presented in chapter 2. As part of this, the Government identified where schemes could have negative impacts, for example on the local environment. It considered the predicted beneficial effects of the three schemes, particularly in relation to the needs case and economic considerations. It also assessed how the schemes could conform to wider Government strategic objectives and meet legal obligations, for example on air quality. Bringing these considerations together, the Government's decision on a preferred scheme balances this range of factors, enabling it to determine which scheme, overall, is the most effective and appropriate means of meeting the needs case and maintaining the UK's hub status in particular.
- 3.72 The Appraisal of Sustainability provides an assessment of the schemes against a number of the factors considered in this chapter. It concludes that the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme is best placed to maximise the monetised economic benefits that the provision of additional airport capacity could deliver in the short term, although this scheme is likely to do so with the greatest negative impact on local communities. However, the Appraisal of Sustainability also identifies measures which can help to mitigate these impacts, for example by reducing noise, ensuring that the development is in accordance with legal obligations on air quality, showing how future carbon targets could be met, and assessing future demand scenarios.
- 3.73 Building on this assessment, the Government has identified a number of attributes in the manner of strategic effects, which it believes only the preferred scheme is likely to deliver to meet the overall needs case for increased capacity in the South East of England and to maintain the UK's hub status. The Government has afforded particular weight to these:
- Expansion via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme would provide the biggest boost to connectivity, particularly in terms of long haul flights. This is important to a range of high value sectors across the economy in the UK which depend on air travel, as well as for air freight. It will enable more passengers to fly where they need to, when they need to.
 - Expansion via the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme would provide benefits to passengers and to the wider economy sooner than the other schemes. This is regardless of the technical challenges to its delivery. It would also provide the greatest boost to local jobs.
 - Heathrow Airport is better connected to the rest of the UK by road and rail. Heathrow Airport already has good road links via the M25, M4, M40 and M3, and rail links via the London Underground Piccadilly Line, Heathrow Connect and Heathrow Express. In the future, it will be connected to Crossrail, and linked to HS2 at Old Oak Common. The number of such links provides resilience.
 - The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme delivers the greatest support for freight. The plans for the scheme include a doubling of freight capacity at the airport. Heathrow Airport already handles more freight by value than all other UK airports combined, and twice as much as the UK's two largest container ports.
- 3.74 The needs case has shown the importance of developing more capacity more quickly, and in a form which passengers and businesses want to use. The Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme is best placed to deliver this capacity, delivering the greatest benefits soonest as well as providing the biggest boost to the UK's international connectivity,

doing so in the 2020s at a point when without the scheme 4 out of 5 London airports would be full, with all the problems to passengers this could entail. Taken together, benefits to passengers and the wider economy are substantial, even having regard to the proportionally greater environmental disbenefits estimated for the Heathrow Northwest Runway. Even though the preferred scheme's environmental disbenefits are larger than those of the Gatwick Second Runway scheme, when all benefits and disbenefits are considered together,¹¹² overall the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme is considered to deliver the greatest net benefits to the UK.

- 3.75 A number of mitigation measures will need to be applied to reduce the impacts of the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme felt by the local community and the environment. Airport expansion is also expected to be accompanied by an extensive and appropriate compensation package for affected parties. With these safeguards in place, the Government considers that the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme delivers the greatest strategic and economic benefits, and is therefore the most effective and appropriate way of meeting the needs case.

¹¹² *Updated Appraisal Report*, p44

4. Assessment principles

General principles of assessment

- 4.1 The statutory framework for deciding applications for development consent is contained in the Planning Act 2008. This chapter of the Airports NPS sets out general policies in accordance with which applications relating to a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport are to be decided. This chapter is specific to assessments necessary for the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, but is not exhaustive as to the assessments that may be applicable to that scheme.
- 4.2 The Airports NPS covering the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme establishes the needs case for that proposed development, provided it adheres to the detailed policies and protections set out in the Airports NPS, and the legal constraints contained within the Planning Act 2008. The statutory framework for deciding nationally significant infrastructure project applications where there is a relevant designated NPS is set out in section 104 of the Planning Act 2008.¹¹³
- 4.3 The Airports NPS applies to schemes at Heathrow Airport (in the area shown, for this purpose, illustratively, within the scheme boundary map at Annex A) that include a runway of at least 3,500m in length and that are capable of delivering additional capacity of at least 260,000 air transport movements per annum, and associated infrastructure and surface access facilities. In particular, it also applies to the reconfiguration of and provision of new terminal capacity to be located between the two existing runways at Heathrow Airport. The Secretary of State's policy in relation to other airport infrastructure in the South East of England is set out at paragraph 1.41 above.
- 4.4 In considering any proposed development, and in particular when weighing its adverse impacts against its benefits, the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State will take into account:
 - Its potential benefits, including the facilitation of economic development (including job creation) and environmental improvement, and any long term or wider benefits; and
 - Its potential adverse impacts (including any longer term and cumulative adverse impacts) as well as any measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for any adverse impacts.
- 4.5 In this context, environmental, safety, social and economic benefits and adverse impacts should be considered at national, regional and local levels. These may be identified in the Airports NPS, or elsewhere. The Secretary of State will also have regard to the manner in which such benefits are secured, and the level of confidence in their delivery.

¹¹³ Planning Act 2008, section 104 – decisions in cases where an NPS has effect

- 4.6 The National Networks NPS sets out the Government's policies to deliver development of nationally significant infrastructure projects on the national road and rail networks and strategic rail freight interchanges. It provides planning guidance for promoters of nationally significant infrastructure projects on the road and rail networks, and the basis for the examination by the Examining Authority and decisions by the Secretary of State.
- 4.7 Where the applicant's proposals in relation to surface access meet the thresholds to qualify as nationally significant infrastructure projects under the Planning Act 2008, or is associated development under section 115 of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State will consider those aspects by reference to both the National Networks NPS and the Airports NPS, as appropriate. To the extent that discrete aspects of the surface access proposals do not qualify as nationally significant and cannot be included in a development consent application as associated development (for example), the applicant will be expected to pursue or secure necessary consent(s) through the most appropriate alternative consenting regime. This might include, for example, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Highways Act 1980, or the Transport and Works Act 1992, promoted by a third party if need be.
- 4.8 The Secretary of State will consider any relevant nationally significant road and rail elements of the applicant's proposals in accordance with the National Networks NPS and with the Airports NPS. If there is conflict between the Airports NPS and other NPSs, the conflict should be resolved in favour of the NPS that has been most recently designated. The Airports NPS and the National Networks NPS may also be a material consideration in decision making on applications for road and rail schemes associated with or related to the preferred scheme that fall under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Transport and Works Act 1992, or other legislation relating to planning. Whether, and to what extent, the Airports NPS and the National Networks NPS are a material consideration will be judged on a case by case basis by the relevant decision makers.
- 4.9 The Examining Authority should only recommend, and the Secretary of State will only impose, requirements in relation to a development consent, that are necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be consented, enforceable, precise, and reasonable in all other respects.¹¹⁴ The need for requirements in respect of the phasing of the scheme is likely to be an important consideration, so that effects of construction and operational phases are properly mitigated, as well as any changes in the operations of the airport that may occur in line with the phasing of physical works and commencement of operations. Guidance on the use of planning conditions or any successor to it should be taken into account where requirements are proposed.
- 4.10 Obligations under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 should only be sought where they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, (including where necessary to ensure compliance with the Airports NPS), directly related to the proposed development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.¹¹⁵

Scheme variation

- 4.11 While the Government has decided that a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport is its preferred scheme to deliver additional airport capacity (an illustrative masterplan is at

¹¹⁴ National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, paragraph 206, or any successor document

¹¹⁵ Town and Country Planning Act 1990, section 106; Regulation 122(2) Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010; National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, paragraph 204

Annex B of the Airports NPS), this does not limit variations resulting in the final scheme for which development consent is sought. To benefit from the full support of policy within the Airports NPS, any application(s) will have to fall within the boundaries and parameters set out in the Airports NPS. However, the form of a development for which an application is made is a matter for the applicant. The Airports NPS does not prejudice the viability or merits of any particular application, detailed scheme or applicant. It governs the location, limits and nature of such schemes. It will be for an Examining Authority, and ultimately the Secretary of State, to determine whether any future application is compliant with the Airports NPS, meets the need for additional capacity, and is of benefit to the UK, whilst minimising any harm caused.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 4.12 All proposals for projects that are subject to the European Union's Environmental Impact Assessment Directive,¹¹⁶ and are likely to have significant effects on the environment, must be accompanied by an environmental statement, describing the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project.¹¹⁷ The Directive specifically requires an Environmental Impact Assessment to identify, describe and assess effects on human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate, the landscape, material assets and cultural heritage, and the interaction between them. Schedule 4 to the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017¹¹⁸ sets out the information that should be included in the environmental statement. This includes a description of the likely significant effects of the proposed project on the environment, covering the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short-, medium- and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the project, and also the measures envisaged for avoiding or mitigating significant adverse effects.
- 4.13 When examining a proposal to which the Airports NPS applies, the Examining Authority should ensure that likely significant effects at all stages of the project have been adequately assessed. The effects of any changes in operations, including the number of air traffic movements, during the construction and operational phases must be properly assessed and appropriate mitigation secured for any significant effects. Any requests for environmental information not included in the original environmental statement should be proportionate and focus only on likely significant effects. In the Airports NPS, the terms 'effects', 'impacts' or 'benefits' should accordingly be understood to mean likely significant effects, impacts or benefits.
- 4.14 When considering significant cumulative effects, any environmental statement should provide information on how the effects of an applicant's proposal would combine and interact with the effects of other development (including projects for which consent has been granted, as well as those already in existence if they are not part of the baseline).¹¹⁹
- 4.15 The Examining Authority should consider how significant cumulative effects, and the interrelationship between effects, might as a whole affect the environment, even

¹¹⁶ Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The amendments to Directive 2011/92/EU made by Directive 2014/52/EU have been transposed into domestic legislation. The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 have, subject to transitional arrangements, with amendments, consolidated the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 and various amending regulations

¹¹⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/572/contents/made>

¹¹⁸ Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (S.I. 2017/572)

¹¹⁹ The applicant should refer to the Planning Inspectorate's advice on assessing cumulative effects <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Advice-note-17V4.pdf>

though they may be acceptable when considered on an individual basis or with mitigation measures in place.

- 4.16 In some instances it may not be possible at the time of the application for development consent for all aspects of the proposal to have been settled in precise detail. Where this is the case, the applicant should explain in its application which elements of the proposal have yet to be finalised, and the reasons why this is the case.
- 4.17 Effort should be made to refine the detail of the proposed development. However, where details are still to be finalised, such as in respect of the phasing of the development and operational changes at the airport, the applicant is advised to set out in the environmental statement the relevant design parameters used for the assessment. The environmental statement should explain, with reference to the parameters, what the maximum extent of the proposed development may be (for example in terms of site area) or the extent of change in respect of operational impacts, and assess the potential adverse effects which the project could have, to ensure that the impacts of the project as it may be constructed have been properly assessed.
- 4.18 Should the Secretary of State decide to grant development consent for an application where details are still to be finalised, this will need to be reflected in appropriate development consent requirements in the development consent order. It may be the case that development consent is granted for a proposal and, at a later stage, the applicant wishes (for technical or commercial reasons) to construct it in such a way that it is outside the terms of what has been consented, for example because its extent will be greater than has been provided for in terms of the consent. In this situation, it will be necessary for the applicant to apply for a change to be made to the development consent provided under the Planning Act 2008.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.19 Prior to granting development consent, the Secretary of State as competent authority must comply with the duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Under these regulations, if the competent authority considers that the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and is not connected with or necessary to the management of that site, it must make an Appropriate Assessment of the implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.^{120 121} The applicant should also refer to the Airports NPS sections on biodiversity, land use, and air quality. The competent authority must consult Natural England to ensure that impacts on European sites are adequately considered.
- 4.20 The applicant is required to provide sufficient information with their applications for development consent to enable the Secretary of State to carry out an Appropriate Assessment if required. This information should include details of any measures that are proposed to minimise or avoid any likely significant effects on a European site. The information provided may also assist the Secretary of State in concluding that an Appropriate Assessment is not required because significant effects on European sites

¹²⁰ This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

¹²¹ Directive 2011/92/EU was amended in 2014 by Directive 2014/52/EU. As amended, Article 2(3) of the Directive provides that, where an obligation to assess environmental effects arises simultaneously from the EIA Directive and the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EU) and/or the Wild Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC), Member States "shall, where appropriate, ensure that coordinated and/or joint procedures" are provided for

are sufficiently unlikely that they can be excluded. If it is concluded there is likely to be a significant effect, or such effects cannot be ruled out (alone or in combination), an Appropriate Assessment is required.

- 4.21 If an Appropriate Assessment for a proposed airport development concludes that it is not possible to rule out an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site, the Habitats Directive permits a derogation, subject to the proposal meeting three tests. These tests are (a) that there are no less damaging alternative solutions, (b) that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the proposal going ahead, and (c) that adequate and timely compensation measures will be put in place to ensure the overall coherence of the network of protected sites is maintained. At detailed design stage, and in so far as it may be necessary, the matters set out in the Airports NPS will be relevant to determining whether there are alternative solutions and imperative reasons of overriding public interest, provided that the design remains consistent with the objectives of the Airports NPS.
- 4.22 Where a development may negatively affect any priority natural habitat type or priority species,¹²² any imperative reasons of overriding public interest case would need to be established solely on one or more of the grounds relating to human health, public safety or beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment. The competent authority may only rely on other (i.e. social or economic) imperative reasons of overriding public interest if it has first obtained an opinion from the European Commission.

Equalities

- 4.23 The Airports Commission's stated objective on equalities was "to reduce or avoid disproportionate impacts on any social group".¹²³ At consultation stage, the Airports Commission carried out a high level Equality Impact Assessment.
- 4.24 The Appraisal of Sustainability to the Airports NPS sets out an assessment of equalities impacts, informed by the work of the Airports Commission. The Airports Commission was clear that its assessment was based upon current scheme design, and that a more detailed Equality Impact Assessment would likely be necessary as design, supporting measures and operational plans were developed.
- 4.25 The Airports Commission's assessment identified different types of equalities impacts for each of its shortlisted schemes, but no substantial difference in the overall extent of equalities impacts. The Airports Commission's assessment, and the assessment carried out for the Appraisal of Sustainability that informs the Airports NPS, both concluded that negative equalities impacts could be well mitigated through good design and operation, and supporting measures and plans.
- 4.26 The Department for Transport has reviewed the Airports Commission's work, informed by the Equality Assessment carried out as part of the Appraisal of Sustainability. The Government is satisfied that the scope of the Airports Commission's work was appropriate at this stage of scheme development, that the Airports Commission's approach was consistent with the Equality Act 2010, and that its conclusion is consistent with the evidence produced.
- 4.27 For any application to be considered compliant with the Airports NPS, it must be accompanied by a project level Equality Impact Assessment examining the potential impact of that project on groups of people with protected characteristics. In order to

¹²² As listed in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive

¹²³ *Airports Commission: Appraisal Framework*, p98

benefit from the support of the Airports NPS, the results of that project level Equality Impact Assessment must be within the legal limits and parameters of acceptability outlined in the Appraisal of Sustainability that informs the Airports NPS.

Assessing alternatives

- 4.28 The applicant should comply with all legal obligations and policy set out in the Airports NPS on the assessment of alternatives. In particular:
- The Environmental Impact Assessment Directive requires projects with significant environmental effects to include a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the applicant which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the significant effects of the project on the environmental effects;
 - There may also be other specific legal obligations requiring the consideration of alternatives, for example, under the Habitats and Water Framework Directives; and
 - There may be policies in the Airports NPS requiring consideration of alternatives, for example the flood risk sequential test.

Criteria for ‘good design’ for airports infrastructure

- 4.29 The applicant should include design as an integral consideration from the outset of a proposal.
- 4.30 Visual appearance should be an important factor in considering the scheme design, as well as functionality, fitness for purpose, sustainability and cost. Applying ‘good design’ to airports projects should therefore produce sustainable infrastructure sensitive to place, efficient in the use of natural resources and energy used in their construction, and matched by an appearance that demonstrates good aesthetics as far as possible.
- 4.31 A good design should meet the principal objectives of the scheme by eliminating or substantially mitigating the adverse impacts of the development, for example by improving operational conditions. It should also mitigate any existing adverse impacts wherever possible, for example in relation to safety or the environment. A good design will also be one that sustains the improvements to operational efficiency for as many years as is practicable, taking into account capital cost, economics and environmental impacts.
- 4.32 Scheme design will be an important and relevant consideration in decision making. The Secretary of State will need to be satisfied that projects are sustainable and as aesthetically sensitive, durable, adaptable and resilient as they can reasonably be, having regard to regulatory and other constraints and including accounting for natural hazards such as flooding. The Secretary of State will also need to be satisfied that extant security, customs and immigration measures are maintained or reprovided.
- 4.33 The scheme should take into account, as far as possible, both functionality, including fitness for purpose and sustainability, and aesthetics, including the scheme’s contribution to the quality of the area in which it would be located. The applicant will want to consider the role of technology in delivering new airports projects. Professional, independent advice on the design aspects of a proposal should be undertaken to ensure good design principles are embedded into infrastructure proposals.

- 4.34 There may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of siting and design measures relative to existing landscape and historical character and function, landscape permeability, landform, and vegetation.
- 4.35 The applicant should be able to demonstrate in its application how the design process was conducted and how the proposed design evolved. Where a number of different designs were considered, the applicant should set out the reasons why the favoured choice has been selected. The Examining Authority and Secretary of State will take into account the ultimate purpose of the infrastructure and bear in mind the operational, safety and security standards which the design has to satisfy.

Costs

- 4.36 The relationship between cost and affordability for a scheme is governed by the regulated funding of the airport and funding from other sources, and the need to comply with the Government's guidance on compulsory acquisition of land under the Planning Act 2008.¹²⁴ This guidance is relevant to any scheme that will require the compulsory acquisition of land, which is expected in relation to any scheme to which this NPS applies which would include any application for development consent for a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport. That guidance sets out what a promoter must demonstrate if it is to be granted powers of compulsory acquisition - including in relation to impediments to a scheme and financial resources.
- 4.37 Heathrow Airport is subject to economic regulation by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) under the Civil Aviation Act 2012. As part of the CAA's discharge of its duty under the Civil Aviation Act 2012 to further the interests of users of air transport services (passengers and cargo owners), the CAA has granted an economic licence to the operator of Heathrow Airport to levy airport charges. This licence sets a maximum yield per passenger that can be recovered by the operator of Heathrow Airport through airport charges (the "maximum yield"). This maximum yield is set by the CAA having conducted a process that scrutinises, among other things, the business plan submitted by the licence holder and developed through constructive engagement with the airlines, as well as other submissions from airlines and stakeholders. This process of scrutiny of costs will include benchmarking exercises from industry professionals and assessments by an Independent Fund Surveyor as well as by the CAA. Expansion will also be subject to specific gateway reviews by airlines and stakeholders. The final business plan will include details of the future capital expenditure that the licensee proposes to incur.
- 4.38 For the development of new capacity at Heathrow, the CAA will set the maximum yield having regard to the matters required by the Civil Aviation Act 2012. The CAA will consider, among other things:
- the need to secure that the licence holder is able to finance its provision of airport operation services; and
 - the economy and efficiency of the proposals set out in any business plan (including such capital expenditure proposals as are contained in it),
- as part of its process of setting the maximum yield per passenger in the period covered by the price control.

¹²⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236454/Planning_Act_2008_-_Guidance_related_to_procedures_for_the_compulsory_acquisition_of_land.pdf

- 4.39 The applicant should demonstrate in its application for development consent that its scheme is cost-efficient and sustainable, and seeks to minimise costs to airlines, passengers and freight owners over its lifetime.
- 4.40 Detailed scrutiny of any business plan put forward by the licence holder will fall under the CAA's regulatory process under the Civil Aviation Act 2012, and the detailed matters considered under that process are not expected to be scrutinised in the same way during the examination and determination of an application for development consent. The CAA is a statutory consultee for all proposed applications relating to airports or which are likely to affect an airport or its current or future operation. The applicant is expected to provide the CAA with the information it needs to enable it to assist the Examining Authority in considering whether any impediments to the applicant's development proposals, insofar as they relate to the CAA's economic regulatory and other functions, are capable of being properly managed.

Climate change adaptation

- 4.41 The Planning Act 2008 requires the Secretary of State to have regard to the desirability of mitigating, and adapting to, climate change in designating an NPS.¹²⁵
- 4.42 This section sets out how the Airports NPS puts Government policy on climate change adaptation into practice, and in particular how the applicant and the Secretary of State will take into account the effects of climate change when developing and considering airports infrastructure applications. Climate change mitigation is essential to minimise the most dangerous impacts of climate change, as previous global greenhouse gas emissions will already mean some degree of continued climate change for at least the next 30 years. Climate change is likely to mean that the UK will experience on average hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. There is potentially an increased risk of flooding, drought, heatwaves, intense rainfall events and other extreme events such as storms and wildfires, as well as rising sea levels.
- 4.43 Adaptation is therefore necessary to deal with the potential impacts of these changes that are already happening. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the provision of green infrastructure.
- 4.44 The Government has published a set of UK Climate Projections, and every five years prepares a statutory UK Climate Change Risk Assessment and National Adaptation Programme.¹²⁶ In addition, the Climate Change Act 2008 adaptation reporting power has been used by Government to invite reporting authorities (a defined list of public bodies and statutory undertakers, including airports) to consider the impact on them of current and predicted climate change, and to report on progress implementing adaptation actions.¹²⁷ Successive strategies for adaptation reporting will be laid alongside five yearly updates to the National Adaptation Programme.
- 4.45 New airports infrastructure will typically be a long-term investment which will need to remain operational over many decades, in the face of a changing climate. Consequently, the applicant must consider the impacts of climate change when planning design, build and operation. Any accompanying environmental statement

¹²⁵ Planning Act 2008, section 10(3)(a)

¹²⁶ Climate Change Act 2008, section 58

¹²⁷ Climate Change Act 2008, section 62

should set out how the proposal will take account of the projected impacts of climate change.

- 4.46 Detailed consideration must be given to the range of potential impacts of climate change using the latest UK Climate Projections available at the time, and to ensuring any environmental statement that is prepared identifies appropriate mitigation or adaptation measures. This should cover the estimated lifetime of the new infrastructure. Should a new set of UK Climate Projections become available after the preparation of any environmental statement, the Examining Authority should consider whether it needs to request additional information from the applicant.
- 4.47 Where transport infrastructure has safety-critical elements, and the design life of the asset is 60 years or greater, the applicant should apply the latest available UK Climate Projections, considering at least a scenario that reflects a high level of greenhouse gas emissions at the 10%, 50% and 90% probability levels, to assess the impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development.
- 4.48 The applicant should demonstrate that there are no critical features of infrastructure design which may be seriously affected by more radical changes to the climate beyond those projected in the latest set of UK Climate Projections. Any potential critical features should be assessed, taking account of the latest credible scientific evidence on, for example, sea level rise, and on the basis that necessary action can be taken to ensure the operation of the infrastructure over its estimated lifetime through potential further mitigation or adaptation.
- 4.49 Any adaptation measures should be based on the latest set of UK Climate Projections,¹²⁸ the most recent UK Climate Change Risk Assessment,¹²⁹ consultation with statutory consultation bodies, and any other appropriate climate projection data. Any adaptation measures must themselves also be assessed as part of any Environmental Impact Assessment and included in the environmental statement, which should set out how and where such measures are proposed to be secured.
- 4.50 If any proposed adaptation measures themselves give rise to consequential impacts, the Secretary of State will consider the impact in relation to the application as a whole and the assessment principles set out in the Airports NPS.
- 4.51 Adaptation measures can be required to be implemented at the time of construction where necessary and appropriate to do so.
- 4.52 Where adaptation measures are necessary to deal with the impact of climate change, and that measure would have an adverse effect on other aspects of the project or the surrounding environment, the Secretary of State may consider requiring the applicant to ensure that the adaptation measure could be implemented should the need arise, rather than at the outset of the development.

Pollution control and other environmental protection regimes

- 4.53 Issues relating to discharges or emissions from a proposed project which affect air quality, water quality, land quality or the marine environment, or which include noise, may be subject to separate regulation under the pollution control framework or other consenting and licensing regimes. Relevant permissions will need to be obtained for any activities within the development that are regulated under those regimes before the activities can be operated.

¹²⁸ <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/>

¹²⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-government-report>

- 4.54 In deciding an application, the Secretary of State should focus on whether the development is an acceptable use of the land, and on the impacts of that use, rather than the control of processes, emissions or discharges themselves. The Secretary of State should assess the potential impacts of processes, emissions or discharges to inform decision making, but should work on the assumption that, in terms of the control and enforcement, the relevant pollution control regime will be properly applied and enforced. Decisions under the Planning Act 2008 should complement but not duplicate those taken under the relevant pollution control regime.
- 4.55 These considerations apply in an analogous way to other environmental regulatory regimes, including those on land drainage, flood defence, and biodiversity.
- 4.56 When an applicant applies for an environmental permit, the relevant regulator (in this case the Environment Agency) requires that processes are in place that are sufficient for the grant of the permit and to ensure compliance with conditions attached to any permit. In examining the impacts of the project, the Examining Authority may wish to seek the views of the regulator on the scope of the permit or consent and any management plans (such as any produced for noise) that would be included in an environmental permit application.
- 4.57 The applicant should begin pre-application discussions with the Environment Agency as early as possible. It is expected, however, that an applicant will have first considered what the Environment Agency is likely to require as a starting point for discussion. Some consents require a significant amount of preparation: as an example, the Environment Agency strongly recommends the applicant should start work towards submitting the permit application at least six months prior to the submission of a development consent order application, where it wishes to parallel track the applications. This will help ensure that applications take account of all relevant environmental considerations and that the relevant regulators are able to provide timely advice and assurance to the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State.
- 4.58 The Secretary of State will be satisfied that development consent can be granted taking full account of environmental impacts. This will require close cooperation with the Environment Agency, the local planning authority and pollution control authority, and other relevant bodies, such as Natural England, Drainage Boards, and water and sewerage undertakers, to ensure that, in the case of potentially polluting developments:
- The relevant pollution control authority is satisfied that potential releases can be adequately regulated under the pollution control framework; and
 - The effects of existing sources of pollution in and around the project are not such that the cumulative effects of pollution when the proposed development is added would make that development unacceptable, particularly in relation to statutory environmental quality limits.
- 4.59 The Secretary of State should not refuse consent on the basis of regulated impacts unless there is good reason to believe that any relevant necessary operational pollution control permits or licences or other consents will not subsequently be granted.

Common law nuisance and statutory nuisance

- 4.60 Section 158 of the Planning Act 2008 provides a defence of statutory authority in civil or criminal proceedings for nuisance. Such a defence is also available in respect of anything else authorised by an order granting development consent. The defence does not extinguish the local authority's duties under Part III of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to inspect its area and take reasonable steps to investigate complaints of statutory nuisance and to serve an abatement notice where satisfied of its existence, likely occurrence or recurrence.
- 4.61 During the examination of an application for development consent for infrastructure covered under the Airports NPS, possible sources of nuisance under section 79(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and under sections 76 and 77 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 should be considered by the Examining Authority. The Examining Authority should also consider how those sources of nuisance might be mitigated or limited so they can recommend appropriate requirements that the Secretary of State might include in any subsequent order granting development consent.
- 4.62 The defence of statutory authority is subject to any contrary provision made by the Secretary of State in any particular case by an order granting development consent.¹³⁰

Security and safety considerations

- 4.63 National security considerations apply across all national infrastructure sectors. The Department for Transport acts as the sector sponsor department for the aviation sector, and in this capacity has lead responsibility for security matters and for directing the security approach to be taken, working with the Civil Aviation Authority. The Department for Transport works closely with Government agencies, including the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure, to reduce the vulnerability of the aviation sector to terrorism and other national security threats.
- 4.64 Government policy is to ensure that, where possible, proportionate protective security measures are designed into new infrastructure projects at an early stage in the project development. The nature of the aviation sector as a target for terrorism means that security considerations will likely apply in the case of the infrastructure project for which development consent may be sought under the Airports NPS.
- 4.65 Where national security implications have been identified, the applicant should consult with relevant security experts from the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure and the Department for Transport to ensure that physical, procedural and personnel security measures have been adequately considered in the design process, and that adequate consideration has been given to the management of security risks. If the Department for Transport, taking advice from the Civil Aviation Authority, Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure and others it considers appropriate, forms the opinion that it is satisfied that current and potential future security needs are adequately addressed in the project and that relevant guidance on these matters has been appropriately taken into account in the application, it will provide confirmation of this to the Secretary of State, and the Examining Authority should not need to give any further consideration to the details of the security measures during the examination.

¹³⁰ Planning Act 2008, section 158(3)

- 4.66 The applicant should only include such security-related information in the application as is necessary to enable the Examining Authority to examine the development consent issues and make a properly informed recommendation on the application.
- 4.67 In exceptional cases where examination of an application would involve public disclosure of information about defence or national security which would not be in the national interest, the Secretary of State can intervene and may appoint an examiner to consider evidence in closed session.
- 4.68 Air transport is one of the safest forms of travel, and the UK is a world leader in aviation safety. Maintaining and improving that record, while ensuring that regulation is proportionate and cost-effective, remains of primary importance to the UK. Since 2003, rules and standards for aviation safety in Europe have increasingly been set by the European Aviation Safety Agency. The UK will continue to work closely with the European Aviation Safety Agency to ensure that a high and uniform level of civil aviation safety is maintained across Europe. The preferred scheme at Heathrow must comply with the UK's civil aviation safety regime, regulated by the Civil Aviation Authority.
- 4.69 There remains a considerable threat to aviation security from terrorism. The UK meets this threat with a multi-layered aviation security regime built on intelligence, effective risk management and robust, proportionate measures, brought together under the National Aviation Security Programme. The regulations governing aviation security in the UK have their basis in UK and European law, and are enforced by the Civil Aviation Authority on behalf of the Secretary of State. The design and operation of the Heathrow Northwest Runway scheme, to which the Airports NPS relates, must comply with aviation security regulations and guidance in the same way as existing airports. There may also be other security considerations linked to any application for development consent under the Airports NPS.

Health

- 4.70 The construction and use of airports infrastructure has the potential to affect people's health, wellbeing and quality of life. Infrastructure can have direct impacts on health because of traffic, noise, vibration, air quality and emissions, light pollution, community severance, dust, odour, polluting water, hazardous waste and pests.
- 4.71 New or enhanced airports infrastructure may also have indirect health impacts, for example if they affect access to key public services, local transport, opportunities for cycling and walking, or the use of open space for recreation and physical activity. It should also be noted, however, that the increased employment stemming from airport expansion may have indirect positive health impacts.
- 4.72 As described elsewhere in the Airports NPS, where the proposed project has likely significant environmental impacts that would have an effect on human beings, any environmental statement should identify and set out the assessment of any likely significant health impacts.
- 4.73 The applicant should identify measures to avoid, reduce or compensate for adverse health impacts as appropriate. These impacts may affect people simultaneously, so the applicant, the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State (in determining an application for development consent) should consider the cumulative impact on health.

Accessibility

- 4.74 The Government is committed to creating a more accessible and inclusive transport network that provides a range of opportunities and choices for all people to connect with jobs, services and leisure opportunities. This commitment extends to all the users of new airports infrastructure, and to the associated surface access facilities.
- 4.75 In 2008, the Department for Transport published *Access to Air Travel for Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility – Code of Practice*,¹³¹ which sets out the legal framework and gives advice and information. Since then, the Equality Act 2010 has updated and extended the legal framework for accessibility.¹³²
- 4.76 In accordance with legal and best practice in relation to accessibility:
- The Government requires the applicant to include clear details of how plans will improve access on and around the airport by designing and delivering schemes (both new construction and upgrade or refurbishment) that address the accessibility needs of all those who use, or are affected by, surface access infrastructure, including those with physical and/or mental impairments as well as older users. Every opportunity to deliver improvements in accessibility on and to the existing national road network should also be taken;
 - The Government will continue to work to ensure that all bus and train fleets comply with legal access standards by 2020, and to improve rail station access for those with impairments in accordance with legislation and best practice; and
 - The car will continue to play an important role, providing disabled people with independence where other forms of transport are not accessible or available. Easy access and car parking provision at the airports is essential to this goal and must meet standards set down in guidance (such as the Department for Transport's *Inclusive Mobility*).¹³³

¹³¹

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/aviationshipping/accesstoairtravelfordisabled.pdf>

¹³² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

¹³³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mobility>