

September 19th Meeting

Note from TENAG in relation to Heathrow Airport Ltd (HAL) Expansion Consultation

1. Consultation

1.1 Introduction

TENAG understand that the consultation is being carried out within a new planning process with requirements set by the Planning Inspectorate. Clearly the ANPS is the framework that HAL have followed but there is nothing to stop HAL from doing better/more than what the ANPS sets out.

TENAG also welcome proposals contained within the consultation that seek to improve the workings of the airport as expansion takes place. The new ideas on respite management, the plan for road user charging, targets for surface transport and embracing the best of emerging technology are impressive. However, these proposals need to be honest as to what is achievable especially as some of what is proposed is contingent upon others such as TfL, HS2, HE and airlines. For the latter reason, there is a need for a joined-up approach and close working with others including DfT.

1.2 The Consultation Process

- There were serious shortcomings and lack of good practice.
- No special help available for deaf, blind, visually impaired or people with learning difficulties.
- Monitoring attendees for diversity – there was a form available but no attempt to ask people to fill in.
- The process was overwhelming even to experts with nothing between over simplistic boards with a questionnaire and huge detailed reports going into thousands of words.
- This resulted in lack of genuine engagement and answers or about the issues which most concerned people.
- The general ambience was ‘marketing’ rather than genuine open discussion.

1.3 The content

Despite lengthy and detailed background reports there was no statement of common ground with issues involving choice or controversy highlighted. For example, local people wanted to know where the people being displaced would be relocated.

Similarly, the division of topics resulted in missing out on how different parts of the transport system would be integrated – such as the dynamic between parking and congestion charging linked to current and future congestion in the area.

Equally impact and mitigation were not matched. This needed to be done on a time scale – say now and in 10 years

1.4 Suggestions

- Use more interactive processes (HCEB has published a toolkit on engagement which gives a menu of good ideas). Use these to discuss options, priorities and trade-offs and build these into the modelling, planning and construction programme. Similarly involve stakeholders in the Statement of Common Ground.
- Explain how HAL will be held to account – what will happen if they miss their targets? Will there be a legal process? Such details of oversight and enforcement is crucial especially in terms of the need for a ‘pan-operational view’ to see how each segment of the plan progresses.
- Be more open about uncertainties including building in phased assessment every 5-10 years.

2. Noise

Four key issues have been identified

2.1 Air Space changes

This was a separate consultation and detailed routes will not be available until 2022.

This lack of detail made it difficult to comment on other aspects of noise impact especially in the context of 25,000 extra flights each year in the four years before the new runway opens. Of particular relevance, is the proposal to co-ordinate the day and night-time respite time. There is also a proposal for a new and innovative approach which gets away from westerly directional preference to 'managed preference'. These two proposals would result in all communities having longer respite. However, the community need to know whether there will be more night flights overall.

Similarly, there is a question mark about the definition and impact of 'exceptional circumstances' and the status of non-scheduled flights.

2.2 The noise envelope

TENAG agree that this is a good concept with flexibility in the process of setting a five-year review and participation via a noise envelope design group. TENAG think that local people should be represented on this group.

2.3 The totality of noise including maintenance, surface transport and construction

The cumulative level of noise needs to be explored further – very little evidence or estimation of this. A suite of metrics should be applied to surface access as well as aircraft noise.

2.4 Consultation with those most impacted

The catchment area for consultation is wide but in particular people living in the immediate locality need a more transparent and trusting relationship with HAL even before the DCO decision.

There needs to be more independent studies on environmental and health impacts. Not all effects can be translated to decibel measurements and it is increasingly accepted that day to day living experiences are as important.

3. Car Parking

3.1 Scale and Phasing

TENAG are concerned about the scale of the two huge car parks proposed. We find the phasing odd and it is unclear what happens to the T4 and T3 car parking. There should be phased development with periodic reviews especially of the need for those planned for 2030 and 2035.

3.2 Off-site parking

Although the issue of PHVs parking in residential areas is being addressed, off-site passenger and operational parking has not been addressed especially likely knock on effects of colleague reductions.

3.3 Pricing policy and distinction between numbers and turnover

The numbers of parking places give an incomplete picture – they need to be considered in the light of turnover and time slots. Thus, although total car parking is set to decrease from 67,050 to about 66,000 by 2040 – this does not necessarily link to a decline in total vehicle movements.

Pricing policy: charges in the Parkways need to be high enough to make public transport or active travel less expensive, yet low enough to attract cars to use the Parkways instead of the terminal short stay car parks (for example for set down and pick up).

Pricing policy should also be related to the ULEZ and VAC charges to encourage low emission vehicles. The current regulatory obstacles to cross subsidising need challenging.

Another concern is that higher prices for parking could lead to higher rates of ‘kiss and fly’ – this was the reason given for granting planning permission to a new car park for Manchester Airport recently. Yet another case for an integrated approach to surface transport planning.

3.4 Other details required:

- Access and egress to the Parkways: the entrances and exits must be able to operate congestion-free and be easy to navigate.
- Internal layouts and wayfinding in the Parkways: such large car parks are unusual in the UK (although they are operated elsewhere in the world).
- Provision of charging points - this seems to be covered in the Master Plan but cross referencing required.
- Access to and from terminal and employment locations: the proposals refer to 'direct shuttle services' and, while it may be too early to specify technology, the objective should be to minimise walking distance, level changes and wait times, and be electric powered. The terminal shuttles may have dedicated routes, but the staff shuttles will probably have to share roads but can still be electric. Although the Parkways are primarily car parks, they will also provide the interchange point for pedestrian and cycle access, so should include cycle parking facilities and good access to the staff shuttles.
- Staff car parking demand: clearly the reduction in staff parking spaces will require very significant action on the part of all employers. The master plan has only limited details about how this demand will be managed.

4 Freight

4.1 Increases in efficiencies

We note that the forecast is to increase cargo from 1.7 to 3 million tonnes by 2040 and welcome the significant increases in efficiency through IT, new building, consolidation and forecourt layouts and vehicle call facilities.

These measures will be essential if the ‘no more traffic’ pledge is to be met and in this context we have the following concerns.

4.2 Concerns and questions

- If the proposals rely on technology and efficiency to accommodate the forecast growth of cargo in (more or less) the existing land area, what happens if the technology and efficiency gains are not achieved? The history of trying to improve backloads is not impressive.
- Although freight vehicles are included in the 'no more traffic' pledge, this will not apply to freight vehicles using off airport facilities.
- There will be an increase in freight related vehicles, many of which are HGVs. Can these be accommodated on the revised road layout?
- Is there any further scope for rail freight beyond the fuel and construction sectors?
- How will the safeguarding for a consolidation centre be applied for?

5 Surface Access

5.1 A good dialogue with HAL

TENAG has focused a lot of discussion on surface access and developed a good relationship with HAL including sharing meeting notes with the Director of Surface Transport who is attending our next meeting in December for further talks. TENAG particularly welcome the influence of our dialogue to date which was reflected in the HAL consultation proposals.

5.2 The need for a regional approach

There is a danger of incrementalism with Heathrow developing separate strategies without a fundamental look about what is happening in the surrounding areas. Some transport and planning policies which might seem not to have a direct effect on HAL could still be highly relevant in the overall impact, and there could be cumulative gains in a joined-up approach.

TENAG accept that setting the boundary is difficult since Heathrow have no control of hotels, freight and cargo providers outside the airport perimeter. However, the ANPS notes that Heathrow is committed to meet the target of no more traffic on roads than today and this would need an area wide approach the structure for which does not yet exist.

This is especially needed in the light of current widespread congestion and full capacity on existing roads and rail.

5.3 Surface access targets

The 'no more traffic' strategy will be challenging without the new Western and Southern railways not to mention the upgrade of the Piccadilly line. We are sceptical as to whether HAL can meet the targets without these new infrastructure developments and pledge our support for accelerating their development which is needed urgently in the light of existing congestion in the region.

The publication of separate modal delivery plans makes it difficult to understand the overall impact of the development, particularly the opportunities for integration and 'moving the chess pieces' between the different modes. Another example is the link between walking/cycling and public transport – important both in itself and as providing added cost-effective solutions as alternatives to car use. Clearly the Transport Assessment accompanying the DCO application will give more clarity to impacts and mitigation proposals and TENAG would welcome involvement with the development of these proposals.

5.4 Mobility as a service

TENAG welcome that there are elements of this concept built into HAL's plan such as free colleagues travel zone, acceptance of Oyster, a taxi and air linking booking App for taxis and an element of road charging. Other ideas should be developed to join this menu such as agile management of HAL's own vehicles such as staff buses between shift times and other examples of higher vehicle utilisation such as introduced by Anglian Water.

However, it is disappointing that a full-scale Mobility as a Service (MaaS) scheme is not envisaged which we feel is a missed opportunity. The concept should certainly be developed as the project develops and there are elements such as repackaging sustainable transport plans for a marketing strategy which could act as a 'pump primer'. Joining with surrounding local authorities to develop such a scheme would also make sense and the experience of Transport for the West Midlands and Helsinki should be studied for lessons learnt.

5.5 Bus and Coach

In the absence of immediate infrastructure developments, bus and coach strategies are crucial in kick starting modal shift. TENAG welcome the proposals for improvements to this provision and are supporting the wider development of a national coach strategy with HAL, DfT and other stakeholders.

6 Overall Conclusion

We urge HAL to improve their approach to consultation and especially public engagement. HCEB will be happy to contribute actions and expertise to achieve this.

The surface access traffic impact of the whole development needs to be addressed and set out in an integrated fashion with more information about impact, options and trade-offs. HCEB and TENAG accept that there is no one perfect answer to many plans and input from stakeholders and communities can provide a good audit trail for the choices made.

We note the HAL proposals for an independent scrutiny panel but think there should instead be a body with stronger legal powers including assessment capabilities and halting development when targets are breached.