

Response by the Hitcham and Taplow Society to Heathrow's Consultation - February 2018

The Hitcham and Taplow Society has been in existence for over 50 years and represents a significant proportion of residents. Its main aim is to ensure that all development within our area is of the highest standard and preserves the character and quality of the environment.

Currently, our rural tranquillity is disturbed regularly by planes departing Heathrow along two Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) - Wobun and Brookman's Park - which were prescribed decades ago by beacons now redundant due to modern navigation technology.

Your Airspace Principles Consultation Document (APCD) offers, on Pages 12 & 13, three options for flight path design:

- Option 1 aims to minimise the number of people being overflown, essentially by concentrating flights over less populated areas such as ours.
- Option 2 aims to minimise the number of people being newly overflown, essentially by concentrating flights within current NPRs including those that pass over us now.
- Option 3 aims to share routes over a wider area, meaning that each specific location on the ground would be overflown less frequently than with Options A or B.

It is clear that Options A and B would lead inevitably to Taplow and Hitcham being overflown by a gradually increasing number of flights through the 'Taplow Corridor' between Maidenhead (to the west) and Burnham and Slough (to the east). Consequently, we must press very strongly for Option C, which would share noise more equally by dissipating it over a wider corridor. The APCD acknowledges that "urban areas have higher general noise levels than rural areas and therefore... aircraft noise might be less noticeable [in urban areas] than in rural areas"

We understand that this would mean some increase in air traffic above our urban neighbours but we believe that the ability of satellite navigation to vary flight paths precisely can easily ensure that nobody suffers incessant and debilitating disturbance. **This option ensures that noise pollution is shared equally across all residents in the area.**

In addition, we wish also to press strongly for there to be a ban on construction traffic travelling to and from Heathrow along the Bath Road (A4) over the ancient and much-valued Maidenhead Bridge. We also look for recognition in your overall infrastructure assessment of the impact of temporary closure of the M4, for which this inadequate bridge is the only current alternative route to Heathrow from the west.

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