

Planning for London Heathrow's Third Runway

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This position statement provides a factual summary for London Heathrow's third runway. It provides members and the wider business community with an outline of the current planning position including timeframes for development.

In October 2016 Her Majesty's Government (HMG) gave its approval of a proposal for a third runway at London Heathrow – the second busiest airport in the world.

Over £16bn worth of infrastructure investment has already been committed that will not only benefit the Thames Valley but is also of strategical importance to the UK economy. This includes Crossrail; London Heathrow T5; High Speed Rail (HS2); the redevelopment of Reading (rail) station and the M4 Smart motorway.

Although HMG has announced the third runway it will require planning consents before construction can commence. Whilst speculation surrounds the possibility of legal and/or judicial review challenges to any permission granted the Chamber seeks to outline the factual planning framework for the permission and timetable for construction.

Planning for the third runway

The planning framework lies, in part, to the Planning Act 2008. This act provides a robust system for all consents and land rights needed to implement Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) with consents determined, by independent planning inspectors, based

on designated National Policy Statements (NPS).

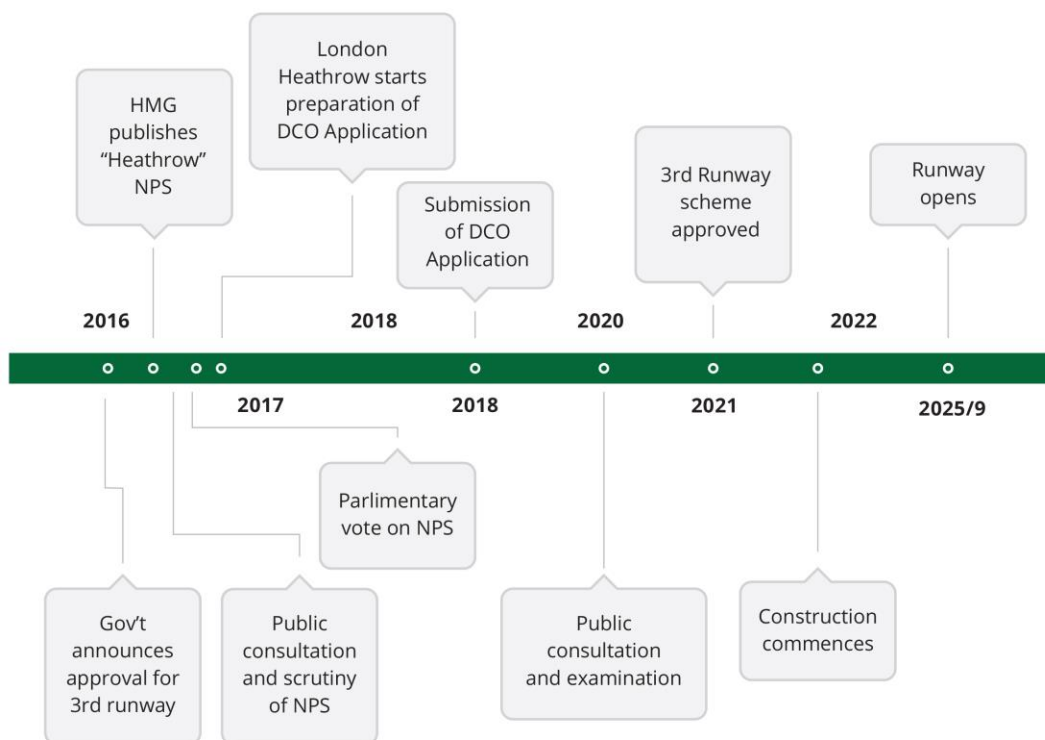
Before the Development Consent Order (DCO) application from the Airport is submitted, HMG will produce a draft NPS¹, which will set-up the reason why the Government believes that the third runway for the scheme is needed and is the right one for the UK. The draft NPS is likely to set out the need for the new runway capacity and the planning framework for determining the application. It will also outline the likely benefits the third runway would bring to the UK economy, employment and tourism as well as setting out the need for the new runway capacity and the planning framework for determining the application.

¹ A "Statement of Principles" between Heathrow airport and the Secretary of State for Transport indicates that HMG could designate the NPS "by 31st July, 2017".

The NPS will undergo public consultation and scrutiny before a vote in Parliament, either in later 2017 or early 2018, prior to designation. In preparing the DCO application, Heathrow Airport will have to undertake robust community consultation, health and environmental impact assessments, which is likely to cover issues around noise and pollution; housing and costs including those to the taxpayer. A separate review of flight paths and airspace will also take place.

The application for the DCO is expected to take approximately 12 months from the start of examination to the Secretary of State for Transport's decision. Allowing time for Heathrow Airport to bring forward its application for the DCO, a process that usually takes around 12-18 months, the scheme could be finally approved by 2020/21.

With relevant permissions in place a new runway could potentially be opened by 2025/26 (though more conservative estimates have suggested 2029/30). With the planning process expected to be dealt with by 2020/21, a further four years to build the runway itself and an additional 12 months to manage the surrounding infrastructure needed.



For further information on this statement or the Thames Valley Chamber please contact Gareth Ralphs on 01753 870 500 or email at garethralphs@tvchamber.co.uk.