

Surrey Climate Commission response to the Draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement consultation

September 2026

The Surrey Climate Commission strongly opposes the proposals for Heathrow expansion, for the reasons set out below.

- Official impact assessment documents published alongside the [Draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement \(HENPS\)](#) reveal that the national economic boost will only be between 0.03% and 0.05% of GDP by 2056, which represents a reduction by a factor of ten from the 0.5% GDP growth figures previously cited by airport developers. According to the DfT's Green Book cost-benefit analysis, the expansion carries a negative net present value of -£23.4 billion to -£62.5 billion over a 60-year period due to environmental, climate, and health trade-offs.
- The minor economic growth will be heavily concentrated in London and the South East. Analysis by the [New Economics Foundation \(NEF\)](#) suggests that the expansion will not create widespread new employment, but will instead displace roughly 15,200 aviation jobs away from regional UK hubs and shift them to Heathrow by 2050.
- Heathrow's holding company is owned by Ardian, Qatar's QIA, Saudi Arabia's PIF, Singapore's GIC, Australian Retirement Trust and China's CIC. Therefore profits and dividends to shareholders can leave the UK.
- When the UK should be on a pathway to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, the draft HENPS will lead to the opposite and therefore exacerbate the impacts of climate breakdown that are increasingly evident. The draft HENPS proposes that emissions rise further, from 37.4 MtCO₂e in 2024 to 41.1 MtCO₂e in 2050. In contrast the Government's Climate Change Committee highlights the need for aviation to reduce to less than 22.7 MtCO₂e. The expansion proposed in this HENPS will increase carbon emissions which will accelerate climate change, so is the wrong side of the 'climate resilient development pathway' set out in the IEMA guidelines. This should be treated as a *significant* negative impact in terms of the climate element of the environmental impact assessment, because it does not accelerate decarbonisation and is at odds with the latest climate science.
- Provisional data from the Met Office shows that this Summer was the UK's hottest on record. The Met Office has also said that the El Nino in 2026 is set to be the strongest in living memory. This will accelerate global heating further. Government policy makers are required to follow the precautionary principle and the expectation that global heating will continue to accelerate means there is an

urgent need for major shifts in government policy, not least governing capital investment of high-carbon infrastructure such as airport expansion.

- The post-Finch ruling means that the HENPS must require all climate impacts to be quantified and included in the Environmental Statement.
- There will be harmful impacts on nature, air quality and noise levels. UK legal air-quality limits are weaker than current WHO guideline values. Extra flights and extra surface traffic increase pollution pressure.
- The project requires compulsory purchase of about 750–800 homes. Compensation does not address the physical loss of those homes.
- As currently planned, surface access to the expanded Heathrow will generate additional car trips on the highway network, exacerbating the project's impact on climate, air quality and noise. The project will also add crowding on already busy London rail and underground lines. Heathrow's project cost estimates, with a central estimate of £49 billion, exclude payment for upgrades to public transport capacity and services.