

Press release: Huge response to dangerous driving proposals

From:

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Thousands of people have had their say on plans to introduce life sentences for killer drivers.

The consultation, which opened on 5 December 2016, attracted over 1,000 replies in just 3 days, reaching more than 9,000 when it closed yesterday (1 February 2017).

The overwhelming response is one of the highest for a Ministry of Justice (MOJ) consultation, and included contributions from victims, bereaved families, road safety groups and charities.

Justice Minister Sam Gyimah said:

Killer drivers ruin lives. While we can never compensate for the loss of a loved one, we are clear that the punishment must fit the crime.

So I would like to thank the thousands who have contributed to this consultation. We will now carefully consider each of these and will set out our plans as soon as possible.

The consultation sought views on whether the current maximum penalties available to the courts should be increased.

The proposals included:

- increasing the maximum sentence for causing death by dangerous driving from 14 years to life
- increasing the maximum sentence for causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs from 14 years to life
- creating a new offence of causing serious injury by careless driving, with a maximum sentence of 3 years
- increasing minimum driving bans for those convicted of causing death.

The plans build on the government's pledge to consider sentencing powers available to the courts for the most serious driving offences. The government will consider the responses and set out its plans in the coming months.

Notes to editors

- The UK has one of the best road safety records in the world – but deaths and serious injuries cause devastation to victims and their families.
- The [consultation](#) looked at the most serious road offences. It did not cover other driving or regulatory offences such as speeding, the setting of drink drive limits, the basic offences of careless or dangerous driving and driving whilst using a mobile phone.
- This follows further action in 2015, when the government increased the maximum custodial sentence for causing death whilst driving when disqualified from 2 to 10 years. A new offence of causing serious injury when driving whilst disqualified was also created, with a maximum penalty of 4 years imprisonment. It also brought into force the statutory requirement to extend a driving ban to take account of any time spent in custody.
- Sentencing remains a matter for independent judges, with decisions made based on the full facts of the case.
- For more information call the MOJ press office on 020 3334 3503 or 020 3334 3529.

[News story: UK invests in new submarine training school on the Clyde](#)

HM Treasury this week approved the Initial Gate Business Case for the new submarine school to be built at Scotland's largest military establishment this week. Final design approval is expected soon, which will allow work to begin later this year.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

We are now making a long-term investment of hundreds of millions of pounds to improve and upgrade the waterfront at Clyde to make sure it is ready to support the United Kingdom's whole submarine fleet.

As well as a boost to the Scottish economy, this will also bring welcome stability for our personnel, who work hard to help keep Britain safe and secure.

The new schools will provide academic and technical training for all Royal Naval personnel entering the submarine service from 2022. It is an important step for both the Royal Navy and Scotland as it means all submariners' careers, whether afloat or ashore, will be principally conducted from Faslane as part of a £1.3 billion investment in making the Clyde Britain's submarine

hub.

All 11 Royal Navy submarines will be based at HMNB Clyde from 2020, seeing the number of people employed at the base will rise from 6,800 people to 8,200. The school will support the Astute hunter killer submarines, as well as the delivery of training for the new Dreadnought nuclear deterrent boats, which provide the United Kingdom with its continuous nuclear deterrent.

Head of the Submarine Service, Rear Admiral John Weale said:

Our new single integrated operating base will make significant improvements to the work-life balance of our 5,000 submariners.

By putting our boats and training in one place, our submariners can put down roots in Scotland knowing that they are no longer required to commute from one end of the country to another.

The re-location of submarine training from HMS Sultan and HMS Raleigh is consistent with the Better Defence Estate Strategy, published in November, which set out the department's plans sets out plans to achieve a more efficient, modern and capability focused defence estate and bring greater harmony to Service families.

Key milestones in the development of a Submarine Centre of specialisation at HM Naval Base Clyde include:

- A drumbeat of arrivals of the last four Astute class submarines on the Clyde due to be commissioned into the Royal Navy between 2018 and 2024 (eventually replacing the Trafalgar class).
- The move of the last two Trafalgar class submarines, HM Submarines Talent and Triumph, to the Clyde in 2019 and 2020 from Devonport (Plymouth). On current plans, the end of service date for Talent is 2021 and for Triumph is 2022.
- The move of the Submarine Escape Rescue Abandonment and Survivability Training capability from Hampshire to the Clyde by 2019.
- A new Nuclear Support Hub, providing modern standard effluent disposal by 2020 which will remain compliant with Scottish and UK environmental standards.
- The Faslane Nuclear Infrastructure Continuous Availability Programme to replace or refurbish Nuclear Facilities by 2024.

- The four Dreadnought nuclear deterrent submarines will start to arrive at Faslane from the early 2030s (replacing the Vanguard-class boats).
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[News story: Government property reductions deliver billions to public purse](#)

The government reduced its estate by over 300,000 square metres – the equivalent of seven Wembley stadiums – and delivered running cost savings of £176 million in the last financial year, according to the latest [State of the Estate report](#) from the Cabinet Office.

Speaking today at the 2017 Government Property Conference, Minister for the Constitution Chris Skidmore announced that since 2010, rationalisation of the estate has reduced its size by a quarter, delivering over £1 billion in running costs.

The sale of surplus properties, including Admiralty Arch and the Old War Office, resulted in a further £1 billion in capital receipts in 2015-16 – a notable step towards the pledge to deliver £5 billion in receipts by 2020.

The report shows that vacant space within the central government estate now only represents 1.4% – well below the average in the private sector of 8.9%.

The Minister outlined how the Government Property Unit's pioneering Government Hubs and One Public Estate programmes are revolutionising the way government uses its property to deliver savings to the taxpayer, homes and jobs, whilst revolutionising the way the Civil Service works.

He highlighted the progress made in setting up a new central body that will take ownership of all relevant government land and property. The body, which will be called the Government Property Agency, has an executive team in place and is expected to go live by the end of 2017.

Chris Skidmore, Minister for the Constitution, said:

The progress that we have made over the past year in rationalising the government estate is something that I am very proud of. Not only are the sales and savings that we have made substantial, but the way in which we are managing our buildings will bring about positive, and lasting change.

Whether releasing land for housing, or revolutionising the way in which civil servants work, we can be confident that we are using

the government estate in the most productive way possible.

[News story: Major step forward in building a global Britain as public has its say on airport expansion](#)

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has today (2 February 2017) taken a major step forward in preparing Britain for leaving the EU, by publishing proposals for a third runway at Heathrow Airport.

A [national public consultation](#) begins today into one of the UK's most important infrastructure projects which will help build a global Britain.

The planning policy proposals show this government is not only making the big decisions but getting on with delivering them.

This will ensure Britain seizes the opportunity to forge a new role in the world after Brexit, supported by the right infrastructure.

On 25 October 2016, the Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling, confirmed that the [government's preferred scheme](#) for adding new runway capacity in the south-east is through a new north-west runway at Heathrow Airport, in line with the recommendation made by the independent Airports Commission, and that the policy for this would be brought forward by way of a draft national policy statement (NPS) which would be subject to public consultation.

This move, taken for the country as a whole, will ensure Britain has the connections it needs to thrive in the global market, sending a clear signal that Britain is open for business, and we are creating an economy that works for everyone.

The government's draft NPS, [Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the south-east of England](#), lays down the planning policy framework which the applicant for a new north-west runway would have to comply with in order to get development consent. It also sets out the need for additional airport capacity in the south-east and the reasons why a north-west runway at Heathrow is the government's preferred scheme.

An NPS is more appropriate for this proposed development because it provides clarity, is speedier and less costly to the taxpayer.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Aviation expansion is important for the UK both in boosting our economy and jobs and promoting us on the world stage.

Leaving the EU is a new chapter for Britain and provides us with a great opportunity to forge a new role in the world. We are determined to seize that opportunity and having the right infrastructure in place will allow us to build a more global Britain.

By backing the north-west runway at Heathrow airport and publishing our proposals, we are sending a clear signal that when we leave the EU, we are open for business.

The national policy statement is a big step forward for what is one of the UK's most important, major infrastructure projects. Now we want to hear your views on it. This is an important consultation and I encourage everybody to get involved across the country.

The draft NPS is now open to a 16-week extensive public consultation to ensure people have the opportunity to contribute their views. The Secretary of State for Transport will use the NPS as the basis for making decisions on any future development consent application for a new north-west runway at Heathrow Airport.

Although the NPS will apply to England only, given the national significance of a north-west runway at Heathrow, the government is consulting across the UK. This will include people who could benefit from expansion at Heathrow and communities who may be directly affected by expansion.

During the consultation, there will be a series of local information events. Around the airport, there will be 20 one-day events for members of the public. There will be a further 13 events taking place in the nations and regions across the UK for business, industry and other interested parties.

At the same time, and as required by the Planning Act 2008, a period of Parliamentary scrutiny will begin for the draft NPS, ending in 2017. Following consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny, a final airports NPS is expected to be laid before Parliament for debate and vote in winter 2017-18.

The draft NPS sets out the measures with which Heathrow Airport Ltd will have to comply in order to get development consent. These include:

- demonstrating it has worked constructively with airlines on domestic connectivity – the government expects Heathrow to add 6 more domestic routes across the UK by 2030; Belfast International, Liverpool, Newquay, Humberside, Prestwick and Durham Tees Valley, bringing the total to 14
- providing a world-class package of support for communities affected by expansion including noise insulation for homes and schools and improvements to public facilities
- putting in place measures to mitigate the impacts of noise including legally binding noise targets, periods of predictable respite and a ban of 6 and a half hours on scheduled night flights

- implementing measures to deliver on its commitments of no increase in airport related road traffic and more than half of passengers using public transport to access the airport
- honouring its commitment of paying home owners 25% above market value rate plus costs for the compulsory purchase of their homes if needed to make way for the new runway

Key benefits of the new north-west runway are expected to be:

- a £61 billion boost to the UK economy over 60 years
- tens of thousands of additional local jobs by 2030
- an additional 260,000 flights a year, with an extra 16 million long haul seats for passengers travelling from UK airports in 2040
- reduced fares, fewer delays and more daily destinations for passengers

[Benefits of Heathrow expansion](#)

Heathrow is already the UK's biggest freight port by value and a new runway will provide a post-Brexit boost for exports. Heathrow's expansion will open up new links between the UK and markets around the world. It will connect UK goods and services to global customers and make the UK a more attractive location for inward investment.

We are building on Heathrow's pledges on compensation to put forward a world-class package worth up to £2.6 billion. Planning consent will only be granted if the new runway can be delivered within existing air quality limits and climate change obligations. Proposals for expansion also include a 6 and a half hour ban on scheduled night flights for the first time.

The government has appointed [Sir Jeremy Sullivan](#), the former Lord Justice of Appeal, to independently oversee the consultation process and ensure it is run fairly.

Airspace and noise consultation

Alongside the draft NPS, the government has also published today separate proposals to modernise the way UK airspace is managed. This consultation; [UK airspace policy: a framework for balanced decisions on the design and use of airspace](#) is seeking views on how aircraft noise is managed effectively while updating airspace policies. Proposals will look at how the number of aircraft entering and leaving our airspace can be managed effectively – using the latest technology to make airspace more efficient, reducing the need for stacking and making journeys faster and more environmentally friendly. They will also include draft guidance on how noise impacts should be assessed and used to inform decisions on airspace.

The consultation also includes proposals on the role of an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise, which we will establish. The commission would build relationships between industry and communities and ensure an even fairer process for making changes to the use of airspace and flight paths.

These proposals will influence decisions taken later in the planning process

for a north-west runway at Heathrow, including how local communities can have their say on airspace matters and how impacts on them are taken into account.

Both consultations start from today and last for 16 weeks, closing on 25 May 2017.

Public consultation events are taking place across the country.

Cranford agreement

The government has today [granted planning permission for works at Heathrow Airport](#) which, when complete, will enable full use of both runways subsequent to the government's earlier decision to end the 'Cranford agreement'. These works will result in a fairer distribution of aircraft noise in built-up areas close to Heathrow Airport. They do not allow for any increase in the number of permitted movements from the airport.

Statement to Parliament: Additional airport capacity and airspace policy reform

Introduction

With permission Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement about airport capacity and airspace policy.

In October last year (2016) I announced that the government had selected a new north-west runway scheme at Heathrow as its [preferred scheme for new airport capacity in the south-east](#).

Mr Speaker, aviation expansion is important for the UK both in boosting our economy and jobs and promoting us on the world stage.

Leaving the EU is a new chapter for Britain and provides us with a great opportunity to forge a new role in the world.

We are determined to seize that opportunity and having the right infrastructure in place will allow us to build a more Global Britain.

By backing the north-west runway at Heathrow airport and publishing our proposals today (2 February 2017), we are sending a clear signal that when we leave the EU, we are open for business.

Mr Speaker, today I lay before Parliament a [draft Airports National Policy Statement](#) and begin a period of extensive [public consultation on the](#)

[proposals it contains](#).

The draft Airports National Policy Statement is accompanied by an [Appraisal of sustainability](#) which assesses the potential economic, social and environmental impacts of the proposed policy. I have published all of this information online, to ensure that this process is as transparent as possible.

The need for additional airport capacity

Over the last 70 years, the UK has failed to build the capacity needed to match people's growing desire for travel. Unless we take action, every London airport is forecast to be full by 2040.

Doing nothing is no longer a choice we can afford to make. Without expansion, constraints in the aviation sector 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.

Heathrow north-west runway

Mr Speaker, this government believes that a new north-west runway at Heathrow best delivers the need for additional airport capacity, the draft Airports National Policy Statement sets out this rationale in full.

It is expected that Heathrow will provide the greatest economic and employment benefits, delivering tens of thousands of additional local jobs by 2030 and up to £61 billion of economic benefits, not including wider trade benefits.

This a scheme that will benefit the whole of the UK, I will expect Heathrow Airport to work with airlines to improve domestic connectivity, including the addition of 6 more domestic routes across the UK by 2030, bringing the total to 14, strengthening existing links to nations and regions, and also developing new connections.

Heathrow's location means it is already accessible to business and the rest of the UK. In the future it will be connected to Crossrail, and linked to HS2 at Old Oak Common. We are also bringing forward plans to deliver western and southern rail access to the airport as quickly as possible in order to provide greater flexibility, accessibility and resilience for passengers.

The Heathrow north-west runway would be expected to deliver the greatest support for freight. As we leave the European Union, we will need to get out into the world and do new business with old allies and new partners alike – a new north-west runway at Heathrow will be at the heart of this.

In summary, a new north-west runway at Heathrow would be expected to:

- create new global connections
- create tens of thousands of jobs

- reduce fares for passengers
- provide new capacity for freight imports and exports
- spread the benefits of growth to the whole of the UK

Today Mr Speaker, we are sending a clear message that this government is not only making the big decisions but getting on with delivering them.

Conditions

Mr Speaker, I am clear that expansion must not come at any cost, and we will meet our legal requirements on air quality and obligations on carbon.

The Airports National Policy Statement, if designated, will provide the primary basis for making decisions on any development consent application for a new north-west runway at Heathrow Airport.

Heathrow Airport would be expected to provide up to £2.6 billion to communities who are affected by the expansion including noise insulation for homes and schools, improvements to public facilities and other measures. This includes a community compensation fund and establishing a community engagement board.

For those people whose homes need to be compulsorily purchased to make way for the new runway or for those who take up the voluntary scheme we expect Heathrow to honour its commitment of payments of 25% above the full market value of their home and cover of all costs including stamp duty, moving and legal fees.

I am clear that the environmental impact of expansion must be minimised. Industry leading measures will be required to mitigate air quality impacts and Heathrow Airport will be required to demonstrate that the scheme can be delivered within legal air quality obligations.

Heathrow Airport should continue to strive to meet its public pledge that aims to have landside airport-related traffic no greater than today.

Measures will be required to mitigate the impacts of noise, including legally binding noise targets and periods of predictable respite. The government also expects a ban of 6 and a half hours on scheduled night flights.

Lastly, construction must also take place in a manner that minimises impacts on the environment and the local community.

Outside of the planning system I am clear that there must be conditions on cost. Expansion costs will be paid for by the private sector, not by the taxpayer. The government expects industry to work together to drive down costs.

I have appointed [Sir Jeremy Sullivan](#), the former Senior President of Tribunals, to provide independent oversight of the draft Airports National Policy Statement consultation process.

Airspace policy

Mr Speaker, I would now like to turn to the second consultation that I wish to bring to the attention of the House on UK airspace policy.

I am publishing proposals to modernise the way UK airspace is managed, which will be consulted on in parallel.

By taking steps now to future-proof this vital infrastructure, we can harness the latest technology to make airspace more efficient as well as making journeys faster and more environmentally friendly.

The [policy principles set out in this airspace consultation](#) would influence decisions taken later in the planning process for a north-west runway at Heathrow.

It is therefore sensible to allow members of the public to consider both matters at the same time.

The consultation will set out our plans to establish an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise and bring forward proposals to improve how communities can engage, and make sure that their voices are heard.

To complement this, we are proposing guidance on how noise impacts should be assessed and used to inform decisions on airspace options.

Mr Speaker, these proposals aim to strike a balance between the economic benefits of a thriving aviation sector and its impacts on local communities and the environment.

Aviation strategy

The aviation sector is a great British success story, contributing around £20 billion per year and directly supports approximately 230,000 jobs across the United Kingdom. It also supports an estimated 260,000 jobs across the wider economy.

I want to build on this success. This year my department will begin the process of developing a new strategy for UK aviation.

This strategy will champion the success story of the UK's aviation sector. It will put the consumer back at the heart of our thinking. I want to make sure that the sector is delivering more choice for consumers and the country as a whole.

I will come back to the House to update you on our plans as they develop.

Consultation

Finally, let me turn to what happens next.

These 2 consultations will start today and last for 16 weeks, closing on 25

May 2017. At the same time, and as required by the Planning Act 2008, a period of Parliamentary scrutiny (the 'relevant period') now begins for the draft Airports National Policy Statement, ending by summer recess 2017.

Whilst planning is a devolved matter this consultation is open to the whole of the UK as additional airport capacity will benefit us all.

Following consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny, consideration will be given to the comments and points raised and, in the light of these processes, should the decision be made to proceed, a final Airports National Policy Statement will be laid before Parliament for debate and the opportunity for a vote in the House of Commons from winter 2017-18.

I am placing copies of all relevant documents in the Libraries of both Houses, they are also available online.

Mr Speaker, I commend this statement to the House.