

Dear sirs,

I attach the following article from the Sunday Times as I feel it is relevant to the noise impact on Ramsgate and investigation for the current Riveroak Mansdon DCO application.

James Hose
Ref MANS-S57179

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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Grayling's team tried to smother Heathrow runway noise warning

A 'smoking gun' memo shows aides wanted to stop the airport telling residents who might suffer from expansion

Jon Ungoe-Thomas

Officials at the Department for Transport plotted to cover up warnings about the extra aircraft noise created by a third runway at Heathrow, a memo reveals.

The six-page document — sent to Chris Grayling, the transport secretary — recommended blocking a plan to tell millions of households about the extra noise they could face from the airport's £14bn expansion.

It puts more pressure on the embattled minister, nicknamed "Failing Grayling" after a series of bungles.

The memo, sent in November 2017, lays bare officials' concerns about alerting residents living beneath potential flight paths about the disruption they might face on the



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grounds that the publicity could lead to "further scrutiny" of the scheme and "unnecessary controversy" before a parliamentary vote.

The memo included a map

showing the area of London and southern England that could be flown over by planes at 7,000ft and lower.

"This memo is the smoking gun," said Colin Stanbury, a

noise expert commissioned by local councils to examine the impact of Heathrow expansion. "They knew the third runway would mean more noise for many more communities and this shows they didn't want people to know."

The map reveals that officials knew vast swathes of London and southern England could be affected. But Grayling and his officials insist publicly that a third runway, with an extra 265,000 flights a year across London and southern England, can be introduced with fewer residents affected by noise.

One council leader accused Grayling of a "giant con" by failing to publish relevant noise maps for the scheme before the parliamentary vote in June that backed the expansion.

The memo sent to Grayling warned that Heathrow planned to leaflet 5m people who could be affected by aircraft noise. The airport was also planning a publicity campaign that would reach about 13m people.

Officials warned that the plan was not "proportionate or

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sensible" and said a direct consultation was "not necessary". The memo said it would underline the fact that no detailed flight paths had been published and could undermine support for a third runway. The memo was sent seven months before parliament voted to approve the runway. The minister was warned by his aviation team: "Using media to reach around 13m people who could be overflown by aircraft as a result of expansion is likely to create significant public debate and unnecessary controversy."

"Most of the people receiving this communication will not have previously engaged with the expansion of the airport."

"The possibility that people might be overflown is likely to create significant public disquiet and could cause previously supportive or neutral stakeholders to reconsider their position."

Heathrow launched its expansion consultation early last year, with its leaflet and advertising campaign, despite the ministerial advice. The memo was produced as evidence by local councils and other parties



for a judicial review of the Heathrow expansion scheme.

The review, which has been heard over the past two weeks at the High Court in London, covered a range of complaints, including an alleged failure by the transport department to alert people who might be affected by increased noise.

John Sauven, executive director of Greenpeace, one of the parties in the judicial review, said: "It is not possible to put another airport the size of Gatwick on the site without

massive consequences on air pollution, noise and impacts on local people."

"Many more people will be affected by aircraft noise and that is what has been covered up."

A three-runway Heathrow would accommodate up to 740,000 flights a year, more than half as many again as the current 475,000. It is proposed that the third runway, which will require a development consent order, is completed by 2025. Some areas

MEMO WARNING

Officials advise against leafletting homes on noise risk

"The possibility that people might be overflown is likely to create significant public disquiet and could cause stakeholders to reconsider their position"

that have not previously suffered aviation noise are being warned that they may have up to 47 flights an hour passing

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overhead.

Council experts say the areas at risk of increased noise include large parts of London

GRAYLING'S FAILINGS

1. Awarded a transport contract to a ferry firm with no ships in late December, but the contract was cancelled last month following the collapse of the deal. Eurotunnel agreed a £33m settlement after it took legal action over the Department for Transport contracts process for ferry services in the event of no-deal Brexit

2. An inquiry by MPs found Grayling should accept personal responsibility after a rail timetable overhaul caused chaos on the network last summer

3. Labour said Grayling's department had gifted rail operators Virgin and Stagecoach a '£2bn bailout' after the East Coast Main Line service was taken back under government control last June

and towns in the home counties, including Epsom in Surrey, Slough and Ascot in Berkshire; and High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire.

Heathrow said: "We have put local communities at the heart of our plans and that is

Areas that may be exposed to noise levels of 65 decibels and above from inbound planes flying at 5,000ft and below after construction of Heathrow's third runway



Sources: Heathrow Airport Airspace and Future Operations Consultation

5 miles

How loud is 65 decibels?

140 decibels
Gunshot

130
Power drill

100
Speeding train

70
Vacuum cleaner

65
Busy restaurant

why we have already sought maximum public input during non-statutory consultations."

The airport said the internal memo by Grayling's officials had no impact on its consultation between January and

March 2018.

The Department for Transport said: "We cannot comment on ongoing legal proceedings. Our position is clear and remains that expansion at Heathrow is a critical pro-

gramme which will boost the economy, increase our international connections and create tens of thousands of new jobs."

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