



Minutes

Title of meeting	PINS / Heathrow Airport Ltd meeting		
Venue	Room 4/00, Temple Quay House, Bristol		
Date	15 October 2014	Time	10:00 – 12:15
Attendees	<p>PINS</p> <p>Simone Wilding (Head of Case Management)</p> <p>Mark Wilson (Infrastructure Planning Lead)</p> <p>David Price (EIA and Land Rights Manager)</p> <p>Heathrow Airport Ltd</p> <p>Ian Frost (Planning and Surface Access Policy Manager)</p> <p>Tony Caccavone (Programme Lead – Hub Capacity Programme)</p> <p>Jonathan Deegan (Planning & Legal Lead)</p>		
Author	Nick Holmes		

1.	<p>Meeting Protocol</p> <p>Simone Wilding (SW) opened the meeting, explaining about the need for PINS to be open and transparent to maintain the confidence of its stakeholders, and that the note of this meeting would be published on the PINS website once all attendees were satisfied with the content.</p> <p>Jonathan Deegan (JD) explained that nothing was going to be discussed that wasn't already in the public domain.</p>
2.	<p>Overview of Heathrow's proposal for growth</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>Tony Caccavone (TC) explained that last year, the Airports Commission shortlisted 3 options. Since May '14 they have been appraising each promoter's detailed submissions and will be launching a public consultation in the next few weeks. The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the Airports Commission's approach and methodology to appraising each of the shortlisted options. The consultation is due to last for 12 weeks; after this the Commission will effectively go into 'lockdown', with a recommendation due soon after the General Election in May '15. Heathrow Airport Ltd (herein referred to as Heathrow) are not looking to add a project page to the Pre-Application section on the National Infrastructure Planning website before then as they are not in a place to say that it is a project until a favourable recommendation is issued, and thus do not want to pre-empt any recommendation by the Airports Commission.</p> <p><u>Proposal for growth</u></p> <p>JD outlined the background behind Heathrow's proposal. 5 years ago a different scheme was in the pipeline which included a shorter runway. The Airport Commission's process prompted Heathrow to reconsider from first principles. Three different options were looked at and submitted to the Commission in July '13. Only one option was shortlisted by the Commission.</p>

	<p>The shortlisted option included a new 3.5km runway to the north west of the airport, the length of which means that any size aircraft can land on it or take off from it. It also allows for a runway alternation system, which will provide respite for communities at either end of the runway through the rotation of taking off and landing operations.</p> <p>JD explained some of the impacts that the proposed scheme would have, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>M25 – would need to be put into a tunnel for a short distance</i> • <i>6 rivers that would need diverting; and</i> • <i>the need for new car parking and balancing ponds to the south of the airport (an element of a drainage system used to control the quality of water returned to the local rivers by temporarily storing and treating airfield run-off).</i> <p>The proposed expansion would mean the removal of c. 750 homes, mainly in Longford and Harmondsworth. There are also more than 100 commercial interests; JD also gave a brief background on the locality. Heathrow currently sits entirely in Hillingdon; the expansion would see Heathrow’s boundary moving in to Spelthorne and Slough.</p>
3.	<p>Heathrow DCO Strategy</p> <p>Ian Frost (IF) confirmed that at present Heathrow’s preferred approach would be to pursue a DCO application, rather than a Hybrid Bill, in the event their preferred option was chosen by the Airports Commission and allowed to proceed. He considered that one of the main drivers for the creation of the NSIP process was the Heathrow T5 Inquiry. As such, while any Heathrow application would be a big test for the process, he considered it entirely appropriate and fitting that a new Heathrow proposal should be taken forward as a DCO application.</p> <p>TC set out the plans for the DCO application. He advised that Heathrow foresee a single DCO, bringing all the relevant agencies together to work as a team in order to maximise the chances of success. Detailed discussions are still to be had with the Environment Agency and Highways Agency around how this could best be achieved. It was advised that the entire infrastructure within the airport boundary would be included in the application, including the new runway and taxiways. JD agreed that it would be challenging to organise all the agencies to work together, but he felt that the end result would be better. TC explained that the proposed plan covers the period up to 2036 and anticipates passenger growth from 83m passengers in 2025 increasing to 130m passengers in 2036. He also explained that Heathrow would be able to deliver more air traffic movements with 3 runways than some comparable airports with 4 or 5 runways. All agreed that further discussions would need to be had on the level of detail that would be required in a DCO application. In particular, the extent to which a master plan could form the basis of a DCO application. Mark Wilson (MW) clarified that, in principle, a DCO was not able to perform the function of a strategic development document like a master plan or outline planning permission.</p>
4.	<p>Heathrow DCO Programme</p> <p>JD advised that the overall programme currently has 5 years for consent and 5 years for construction, although the plan is to carry on with the construction in phase’s right through to 2036, as detailed in Heathrow’s 2036 Masterplan.</p>

	<p>Heathrow are expecting to submit their single DCO application in 2018. Detailed environmental surveys were carried out in 2009 as part of the previous 3rd runway proposal – these are now out of date but are considered to be suitably robust in informing baseline conditions. David Price (DP) advised that it was important to update these survey results in order to make them as relevant to the proposal as possible. IF pointed out that there is currently no National Policy Statement for Airports and Heathrow has made it clear to the Airports Commission that a clear recommendation is needed in summer 2015 in order for the new government to start on the NPS. A discussion was held with DfT on the likely timings of the NPS but nothing has been confirmed. SW explained that the Infrastructure Bill: Planning Provisions, which is currently going through Parliament, will allow PINS to appoint the Examining Authority upon acceptance of the project. MW advised that Heathrow should err on the side of caution and aim for a pre-exam period of c. 4 months, but they could help things along by getting organised on things such as compulsory acquisition and maintaining a focussed database on land interests.</p>
5.	<p>Key learning points from DCOs</p> <p>MW commented that the proposed Heathrow project would be likely to garner more press attention than Thames Tideway Tunnel, but the project would be on a similar scale in terms of the range of interests affected.</p> <p>JD asked for views on whether examinations were best led by planners or barristers. SW advised that TTT was exceptional in that it was the only project so far in which PINS have had to call on external legal advice.</p> <p>MW considered it likely that Heathrow would want to use a barrister, especially for DCO hearings and compulsory acquisition hearings which tend to have more of a legal focus. However, there is unlikely to be any benefit in having a barrister at an open floor hearing. SW advised that the ExA need the promoter to have representatives that can answer their questions with confidence and the requisite knowledge of the site(s).</p> <p>SW also advised that the DCO Drafting Advice Note is due for publishing in October '14 and will include a section on tailpieces.</p> <p>DP spoke about the Environmental Services Team and what they can offer. DP explained some of the differences between the legislative processes under the Habitats Regulations and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. DP also informed Heathrow about MIEU (Major Infrastructure Environmental Unit) in DEFRA and the role they have in supporting developers where a Habitat Regulations Assessment is required. This is set out in more detail in the DEFRA guidance on evidence plans:</p> <p>DP explained the potential benefits of PINS being more involved in the pre-application stage and the ability to provide advice and facilitate workshops between developers and statutory bodies if required. DP emphasised the importance of engaging statutory bodies early on in the process to avoid any surprises at examination. On EIA scoping DP advised to consider carefully what scoping is for and to treat it accordingly. If viewed as a tick box exercise it is unlikely to be helpful. PINS is prepared to scope topics/issues out of the assessment but only if they have the necessary evidence on which to base the decision. The need for proper public participation in the EIA process was also emphasised.</p>
6.	<p>SW closed the meeting and agreed with JD that another session at a later date to delve deeper into DCO and project evolution, scoping and associated development would be welcomed.</p>