

Consultation: Night-time Noise Abatement Objectives for Heathrow Airport from October 2025 - Suggested responses

Consultation questions

Heathrow

Q7. To what extent do you agree, or disagree, with our night-time noise abatement objective for Heathrow Airport?

We do not agree with the wording of the proposed noise objective.

Q8. Provide a reasoning for your answer.

The adverse effects of noise on health are well recognised, and as a local community which is affected by noise from the proposals in this consultation, we have made this point in all our consultation responses re Heathrow over at least 21 years.

Noise for communities affected by Heathrow appears to have been very largely ignored to date, or at best relegated to “not important” in considerations of the proposals for expanding or managing Heathrow. We are pleased, therefore, to note that the proposed noise abatement objective for Heathrow makes at least some recognition of this.

However, **we do not agree with the wording of the proposed noise objective** because:

- It includes the words “where possible”. Heathrow and airlines should be required to take measures to minimise the adverse effects of aviation noise on health and quality of life with no “get out clauses”, and not be offered the opportunity to prioritise economic and business considerations above the health and well-being of local communities such as Bedford Park by operating night-flights
- The proposed objective implies that growth and freight connectivity are more important than health and quality of life considerations by putting those first; the objective should reverse these
- “growth” needs to be defined. Is the objective supporting economic growth, growth in the number of flights, population growth, or any other type of growth?

Q9. Would alternative wording be preferable for the night-time noise abatement objective? If yes, provide a reasoning for your answer.

Yes. See explanation above in Q8.

Q10. Provide alternative wording on a night-time noise abatement objective.

“To limit and reduce the adverse effects of aviation noise at night on health and quality of life whilst supporting sustainable economic growth and recognising the importance to the UK of maintaining freight connectivity.”

Q11. How should the proposed night-time noise abatement objective for Heathrow airport be assessed to ensure it is successful?

Heathrow Airport should recognise fully the considerable harm to health and lifestyle caused by its location which requires the majority of final approaches to be over a city of more than 8 million inhabitants and the blight, especially in health terms driven by noise, that it causes those citizens. **It should cease all night flying.**

The night flight ban would ideally operate from 2230 to 0630. There should be no exceptions, except for an emergency declared by an overflying aircraft. Any flight plan filed at an overseas point of origin that gives an arrival time within the ban should automatically bar that aircraft from taking off.

Aircraft may be quieter than they were, and the economics of the airline industry increasingly challenging, but these are no grounds for allowing the adverse impact on the citizens of the capital city of a country that prides itself on being environmentally responsible.

The airlines will argue that banning night flights will damage them and the UK economy. However, departures from the USA that arrive before 0630 can be rescheduled later in the evening and flights from the Far East can follow the sun by departing early in the morning rather than flying through the night. It is accepted that there may be reductions in aircraft utilisation and workload spreading, but these will be outweighed by the undoubted overall benefit to those who have been for years impacted by aircraft noise, especially in the early morning.

Now is an appropriate and opportune time to introduce a total night flying ban as public awareness and support for more stringent environmental policies increase. Other leading airports around the world have, or are considering, such positive and environmentally responsible behaviour.

Final comments

Q22. This question is optional.