PRESS RELEASE

Heathrow expansion deal huge blow by Committee on Climate Change

Aviation to become biggest source of carbon in UK

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For immediate use

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has advised the Government that aviation will become the biggest source of carbon in the UK by 2050 and that expansion at Heathrow leaves very little room for growth at any other airport.

In the letter, CCC Chair Lord Deben states that demand for aviation will need to be reduced and policies implemented to help limit that demand. (1)

The CCC state that Government need to reassess its airport capacity strategy to ensure that demand is half what is currently predicted. They suggest that a frequent flyer levy would help to curb the demand for growth or alternatively Government could raise taxes on airlines or restrict airport capacity growth.

In a direct blow to aviation industry claims of technological solutions to aviation's carbon problem, the CCC states that zero-carbon aviation is highly unlikely to be feasible by 2050. It estimates that aviation emissions could be reduced by around just 20% through improvements to fuel efficiency, some use of sustainable biofuels, and by limiting demand growth to at most 25% above current levels.

Reacting to the decision, Paul McGuinness, Chair of the No 3rd Runway Coalition, said:

"The CCC letter shows that the idea that technology can help aviation decarbonise is simply not possible and that the days of unconstrained growth in aviation are over. Expanding Heathrow would make aviation the single largest emitter of carbon in the UK at the expense of other sectors and our regional economies. Government must now commit to amending the Airports National Policy Statement in light of the climate emergency."

ENDS.

1) https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Letter-from-Lord-Deben-to-Grant-Shapps-IAS.pdf

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