

April 1999

Dear Neighbour,

In my letter to you on May 16, 1995, at the beginning of the Public Inquiry into a fifth terminal (T5) at Heathrow Airport, I promised on behalf of the Board of Directors of BAA plc and the management of the airport that we would:

- address your concerns
- act practically to minimise our impact
- report to you regularly.

It is right, as the Inquiry ends, that I now report back to you – and I'm pleased to confirm that we have kept our word. Every specific pledge we made in that letter has been repeated formally to the Inquiry; every practical step we promised has been taken.

Before dealing with them, one by one, let me thank you for your patience throughout the process – and for your support. It's been a trying four years; the Inquiry has been exacting and exhaustive. But at least everyone has had their say and all the leading parties to the Inquiry have publicly thanked the Inspector for the opportunity to make their points as fully as they wished.

So, how have we kept the promises we made to you at the start?

#### No 'third' runway

Heathrow has two major runways with a cross runway only used occasionally (for instance, to allow some types of aircraft to land safely in high cross winds). In my 1995 letter we promised that "T5 does not call for a third runway". We have since repeated often that we do not want, nor shall we seek, an additional runway. I can now report that we went even further at the Inquiry and called on the Inspector to recommend that, subject to permission being given for T5, an additional Heathrow runway should be ruled out forever. We said:

*"It is the company's view that the local communities around Heathrow should be given assurances... BAA would urge the Government to rule out any additional runway at Heathrow, and BAA would support a recommendation by the Inquiry Inspector in his report that the Government should rule it out. Indeed BAA invites the Inspector to make such a recommendation."*

**Our position could not be clearer, nor could it be more formally placed upon the record. T5 will not lead to a 'third' runway.**

#### No more night flights

We also said in 1995 that T5 would not lead to an increase in the night flights quota. On the contrary, T5 would help keep the number of night flights down. Now we have told the Inquiry Inspector that if T5 was approved we would accept a legal freeze on the night flight quota... at today's levels.

At the same time as this unprecedented offer was being made we were – as promised – working with airlines to maximise the use of quieter aircraft at night. On behalf of the local community we funded a study of 'night alternation' where the runways used for landing aircraft in the night period were swapped on a weekly basis as they are in the day time. We've also been working with airlines to identify best practice for landing aircraft in order to minimise noise on the ground for local people.

#### Summary

No 14-lane M25

£630 million of rail expenditure

The biggest bus and coach programme in the country

The biggest employee public transport programme in the country

Europe's first dedicated motorway bus lane

A car parking cap on the airport

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130 Wilton Road  
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Environmental action	No more noise	<p>In my 1995 letter I promised that the overall noise climate would be no worse after T5 is fully operational than it is today.</p> <p>Such is our confidence in this promise, based on a balance between a relatively small increase in flights and the phasing out of noisier aircraft, that we have also asked the Inspector to recommend a <b>cap on noise...</b> at the levels at the time pertaining when we first made that promise – in 1994. We have proposed that if T5 is allowed there should be a legally-binding cap on noise at 1994 levels.</p>
Use of other airports		<p>Forgive me for labouring the point, but these promises, now on the record at the Public Inquiry, are worth stressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no additional runway</li> <li>• no additional night flights</li> <li>• no additional noise.</li> </ul> <p>But let me return to my 1995 letter and our other promises.</p>
Contribution to the community	Other action on noise	<p>Our noise and track keeping system monitors aircraft and airlines who fly off track and we have introduced a strict reporting procedure to ensure that airlines are encouraged to modify their procedures. As a result, track keeping figures for departures using Heathrow's runways have improved considerably over the last four years with well over 80 per cent of Heathrow's aircraft now flying 'on track'.</p> <p>All aircraft departing Heathrow are fined if they break noise limits at any time of the day or night. This money goes back into the local community to fund projects which benefit local people. In the four years since the Inquiry has been sitting, nearly £750,000 has been raised from noise fines and spent in your communities.</p>
Conclusion		<p>Data from our track keeping equipment has also been made available to a working group which has been investigating if variations in departure procedures by Boeing 747 aircraft could lead to reductions in noise on the ground. The results showed that by following a particular procedure an average reduction in noise of 1.5 decibels could be achieved.</p>
	No 14-lane M25	<p>We always made clear we didn't need a 14-lane M25 for T5, and we encouraged the then Secretary of State for Transport to rule it out.</p> <p>The final plan has now been announced and our assurances have been confirmed. <b>There will be no 14-lane M25.</b></p> <p>Instead the M25 will be widened to 12-lanes for a relatively short stretch from Junction 12 to Junction 15 (<i>with all the widening being within existing road boundaries</i>) not to service T5 but (as the Transport Minister made clear in a parliamentary answer), to cope with current pressure on the motorway. As we promised...</p> <p>...there will be no greater widening of the M25 because of T5 than is proposed already, with or without T5.</p>