

**COUNCIL**  
**29 MARCH 2023**

**ITEM NO: 17**

**TITLE:** Opposing London City Airport’s proposal to end the ‘weekend respite’ by adding additional flights

**PROPOSING COUNCILLORS:** Matt Hartley, Averil Lekau, Cathy Dowse

**1. London City Airport’s proposals for additional flights**

This Council:

- 1.1. Notes that Council agreed to declare a climate emergency in June 2019, and that subsequently Council agreed a Carbon Neutral Plan in January 2020 and Cabinet agreed a Transport Strategy in October 2022, to respond to the climate emergency.
- 1.2. Is strongly opposed to London City Airport’s latest proposals to introduce additional Saturday and early morning flights – and has serious concerns that this will have an unacceptable and detrimental impact on Royal Borough of Greenwich residents in terms of both noise and air pollution.
- 1.3. Notes that London City Airport’s proposals – as outlined in its planning application (reference 22/03045/VAR) to the London Borough of Newham – would exacerbate noise and air pollution and its impact on our residents by:
  - introducing 6/7 hours of additional flights on Saturdays (for both arrivals and departures) running between the current cut-off of 12.30pm and 18.30 (or 19.30 during British Summer Time)
  - effectively, therefore, bringing an end to the long-agreed 24-hour “weekend respite” from aircraft noise between Saturday 12.30pm and Sunday 12.30pm, which provides vital respite for those directly under the flight path in particular
  - introducing 3 additional early morning flights on weekday and Saturday mornings between an 06.30 and 06.59

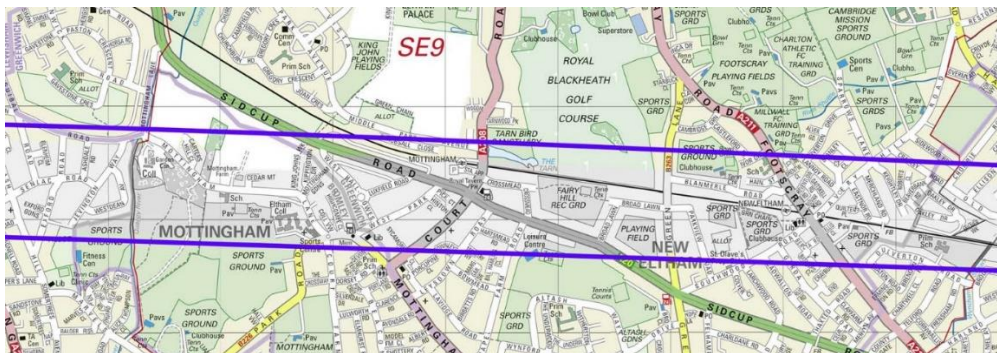
- 1.4. Believes that these proposals will bring an unacceptable level of additional detriment to residents in our borough – including residents in New Eltham/Mottingham and Thamesmead who live in corridors directly under London City Airport’s two arrivals flight paths, and residents in other areas, as outlined in *Section 2* below.
- 1.5. Agrees to request that the Cabinet makes further representations on behalf of all members of the Royal Borough of Greenwich – to London City Airport, the London Borough of Newham, the Secretary of State for Transport and Mayor of London, to oppose these proposals, as outlined in *Section 3* below.

## 2. Current and future impact of LCY flights over Greenwich

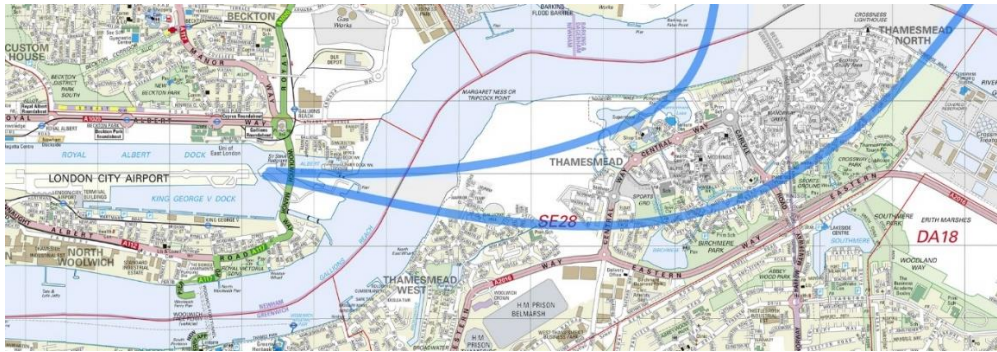
Council:

- 2.1. Notes that aircraft noise – from both London City Airport and Heathrow Airport flights – already has a significant and detrimental impact on residents’ quality life in many areas of our borough.
- 2.2. Notes London City Airport (LCY) flights, specifically, have a particularly acute impact on households that lie within two specific corridors in our borough running directly under its arrival flightpaths:
  - a corridor running directly over **New Eltham** and **Mottingham**, which is in the arrivals flightpath in easterly winds (see *Figure 1*)
  - a corridor running directly over **Thamesmead**, which is in the arrivals flightpath in westerly winds (see *Figure 2*)

*Figure 1: LCY Arrivals flightpath in easterly winds, directly over a corridor running from New Eltham to Mottingham (Source: HACAN East)*



*Figure 2: LCY Arrivals flightpath in westerly winds, running directly over Thamesmead (Source: HACAN East)*



- 2.3. Notes that the current “weekend respite” for 24 hours from 12.30pm on Saturday to 12.30pm on Sunday is a crucial mitigation for the noise impacts suffered by residents in these corridors – and believes that its reduction by 6/7 hours would be unfair and unjust.
- 2.4. Notes that the noise impact of London City Airport flightpaths over the borough has significantly worsened since the introduction of ‘Concentrated Flight Paths’ in 2016, which amplified and concentrated the worst of the impacts caused on a smaller number of households living in these corridors.
- 2.5. Notes and acknowledges the positive economic impact that London City Airport brings to London and the wider UK economy, as well as the amenity it brings to Greenwich residents – but believes that these benefits must always be carefully balanced against the detriment caused to local residents underneath and near to its flight paths.
- 2.6. Notes and acknowledges that London City Airport’s proposals aim to incentivise airlines to re-fleet and transition more quickly to more efficient, modern aircraft with lower carbon emissions and lower noise pollution – but further notes the limited impact this will have in relation to arrival flights over the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
- 2.7. Notes, in particular, that the promised noise reduction from new aircraft for arrival flights – which account for the flightpaths that cross over New Eltham/Mottingham and Thamesmead – amounts to only 3.2 decibels. According to the Civil Aviation Authority, a 3 decibel difference is not noticeable to the human ear – meaning that London City Airport’s proposals bring no mitigation at all in the case of Greenwich residents.

- 2.8. Notes that 2,350 responses were received by London City Airport through the online part of their consultation, with 70% of respondents opposed to these proposals – and that residents of the Royal Borough of Greenwich accounted for the second highest number of responses, after the London Borough of Newham.

Council, therefore:

- 2.9. Believes that London City Airport's proposals to add additional flights and effectively end the "weekend respite" will increase the detriment being caused to Greenwich residents to an unacceptable degree, and should be opposed in the interests of our borough.

### **3. Actions to further oppose the Airport's proposals**

This Council:

- 3.1. Notes that representations have already been made both to London City Airport and to the London Borough of Newham (during its planning consultation), from the Royal Borough of Greenwich, ward councillors in affected areas, individual residents of our borough, as well as advocacy groups such as HACAN East.
- 3.2. Agrees to request that Cabinet takes further steps to oppose the Airport's proposals, by sending a copy of this Council Motion to:
- **London City Airport**, along with a formal request that they withdraw their proposals (and planning application) given the strong objections made by a wide range of stakeholders.
  - **London Borough of Newham**, along with a request that if the planning application is not withdrawn, the views expressed in this motion by Members of the Royal Borough of Greenwich are fully taken into account when the application is considered, alongside the Royal Borough of Greenwich's written objection.

and by:

- calling on the **Secretary of State for Transport** and/or **Mayor of London** to use powers at their disposal to oppose the proposals, including call-in powers to review application if required.
  - calling on the **Government** to do more to expedite the move to, and to ensure investment in, aircraft with lower emissions and lower noise levels.
- 3.3. Agrees to request that the Cabinet takes every opportunity, beyond these actions, to represent the concerns expressed in this motion – including through the Royal Borough of Greenwich’s membership of the London City Airport Consultative Committee (LCACC), and more generally given the authority’s status as a major stakeholder for the Airport.