

Report on Airport Consultative Committee 15 August.

The meeting was preceded by the Working Group on the future daytime noise limit. It was agreed that in future, the day limit should be reviewed at the same time as the night limit, which will simplify matters. However, I wasn't impressed with the outcome of the meeting. Very few aircraft have infringed the current 90dB(A) limit - only Antonov freighters. In fact, very few aircraft get above even 83dB, primarily the An-12 and the A380! These aircraft are noisier on take-off because they are 4-engined and climb more slowly. There was zero enthusiasm for a lower limit that would penalise a quality customer like Emirates. The outcome was that there will be monitoring to find why some departures are noisier than others, in the range 86dB to 90dB. In my view, the data will largely be limited to enquiring why the A380 is occasionally a few dB noisier than it is on the majority of departures.

To avoid upsetting Emirates, I suggested a more generous noise limit for 4-engined aircraft, but this wasn't agreed. Unfortunately, the community representatives seem little reluctant to grasp the nettle that if the noise limit is to achieve anything, it needs to be tight enough to hasten the retirement of noisier aircraft. The "workhorse" aircraft like the current model B737 and A320 are the ones we need to get rid of, but obviously not until they're close to natural retirement anyway. When 90% have been superseded by the Max and the Neo, a new lower noise limit could get rid of the last 10% . . . with an exemption for 4-engined aircraft. But I'm in a minority of one.

The Chair of the ACC, Colin Flack, is now the Chair of the national coordinating body, UKACC, so we'll get improved knowledge of national trends. He was absent on this occasion, so answers to 2 of my questions were deferred:

- What would be the best way for the ACC to monitor and encourage the development by DfT of Guidance on the production of effective Noise Action Plans? [It appears NAPs don't necessarily produce effective actions.]
- Could we receive and discuss the Noise Local Plan policy produced by Crawley BC? [Probably more relevant to Balsall, but it's possible that housing developments around Gatwick are being curtailed.]

I also didn't get anywhere with a question about Airport-related parking in neighbourhoods around airports. It was considered a Working Group to look at the extent of the problem in the Borough would be out of scope.

In response to an enquiry about the integration of the HS2 APM into the Terminal, we were told the design is far from complete. The location could increase walking distances and impact the less mobile. In relation to whether the operating cost of the APM could fall on Transport for the West Midlands, apparently the intention is to have through-ticketing between Euston and the Airport. The Airport representative indicated they're not prepared to bare more cost than with the present system.

There's a design study underway for redevelopment of Birmingham International Station. I asked how we could participate to address issues such as the recent reduction in the number of lifts, the clutter and exhaust pollution outside the station, and the poor maintenance of the surrounding area, but it seems no working group has yet been established.

Also on the public transport front, TfWM plan to terminate the new bendy-bus service at the Airport, but it seems the space for this hasn't been identified.

R Lloyd August 2019

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