

Farnborough Noise Newsletter

September 2022

There has been a lot going on regarding Farnborough airport so from now on, the newsletters will be more structured so people can select the things they'd like to read about. If there are particular topics or questions people have regarding aircraft noise, emission, pollution, safety and the consultation process, just send them to farnboroughnoise@gmail.com and we will endeavour to answer them. An explanation of abbreviations is at the bottom of the newsletter.

Latest news



A public meeting was held in Churt on 20th September at the request of Churt Parish Council. About 100 people attended. There were a lot of questions and much concern with the way the PIR is being handled and the lack of oversight of the CAA.

The focus of the presentation was noise in this rural area, recognising there are other issues nearer the airport such as pollution and emissions.

The presentation is attached. If other councils would like to arrange a similar event, please get in touch.

What's been going on with the PIR

The Farnborough PIR has continued but with no engagement with the public or councils. The CAA has clarified that the public can respond to the PIR, but it hasn't provided any information and data. Nor will it do so until the 28-day response window in March 2023. Such a short window may suit businesses with teams at the ready but not the public that need more time to digest the data, ask questions and respond. To be clear, complaints and observations regarding any issues relating to the airspace change can be made now rather than waiting until the end of the PIR process. If you have issues with noise complaints made to the airport, Geoff Marks is the noise specialist on the FACC. He has offered to help. g_be.marks@ntlworld.com.

The CAA has now included the impact of aircraft noise as far out as 20 miles and 7,000ft saying it was always included in the scope of the PIR and that there had been a "misunderstanding" no "misunderstanding" as the CAA and FAL has stated quite clearly in writing many times over the past year that measuring noise further out than 2 miles from the airport would be excluded. Despite this change in scope, the airport still hasn't started collecting noise data. I expect it has been waiting until it is quieter after the summer holidays as that is when there are most flights going to holiday destinations like Ibiza, Nice, Palma, etc as well as the many helicopters going to holiday homes in Cornwall. The remote sound monitoring equipment that the airport is supposed to make available for public use still isn't available, despite it being a requirement of the original planning consent. And the CAA has continued to refuse to provide data in response to many Freedom of Information

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requests. Nor has the business case been provided that justified the recognised inconvenience and disturbance to the public – that is years late.

Let's not forget that the purpose of the PIR is to "assess the impact of the airspace change". That means not just a few selected impacts that are not relevant to the public. While the change in scope to include aircraft noise further out is a good step, it needs to include flights up to 20,000ft as many Heathrow and Gatwick aircraft are now flying lower and will be excluded unless below 7,000ft. 20,000ft was the height that was used in the 2014 consultation to assess the volume of aircraft so it makes sense to align with that. There is barely a minute every hour of the day when aircraft noise of some form isn't audible in many rural areas west and south of the airport.

The PIR still doesn't include an assessment of safety in uncontrolled airspace that has deteriorated as a result of the airspace change. You may like to look at this: <https://youtu.be/MQvT9qrrSsQ>. Nor does it include a proper assessment of pollution and emissions from the airport. FAL claims it is "carbon neutral" but excludes the emissions and pollution from the flights themselves. FAL has now started building its latest mega-hanger to keep aircraft out of the rain. It doesn't matter if it has solar generation on the roof – that doesn't make it "green".

There is worse to come

The government intends to double the number of flights in the next 15 years to drive economic growth. This is entirely at odds with its stated objective to reduce aviation emissions and contrary to advice from the government's Climate Change Commission (IPCC) to curb flights to reduce emissions by 40% by 2030. That's what other European countries are doing. The UK is heading in the opposite direction. All these aircraft need more airspace so the CAA has started another re-design of all the UK's airspace. It's called the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS). MPs are being consulted at the moment but the public aren't. The danger is that if the CAA uses the same approach that it did for Farnborough's airspace, it will result more controlled airspace because they will fly over rural areas (to minimise the number of people overflown) and they will fly over the same people relentlessly (using very narrow GPS navigation tracks). It goes without saying that there will be no or inadequate consultation with the public and those most impacted. There are already guidelines to prevent or reduce aircraft noise, but since they are only guidelines, these can and are ignored (e.g. The Air Navigation Guidance 2017 and the British Helicopter Association Guidelines). They need to be regulations that are enforced.

Ministers getting involved

The letters that the public have been sending to their councils/MPs are having an effect. Jeremy Hunt's team spent an hour and a half talking through the issues relating to Farnborough and the CAA. He has sponsored and will attend a meeting with the CAA/FAL/FACC/Farnborough Noise in November. Please keep writing to your MPs as there are seven other MPs representing impacted residents that haven't engaged yet.

Farnborough Airport playing fast and loose

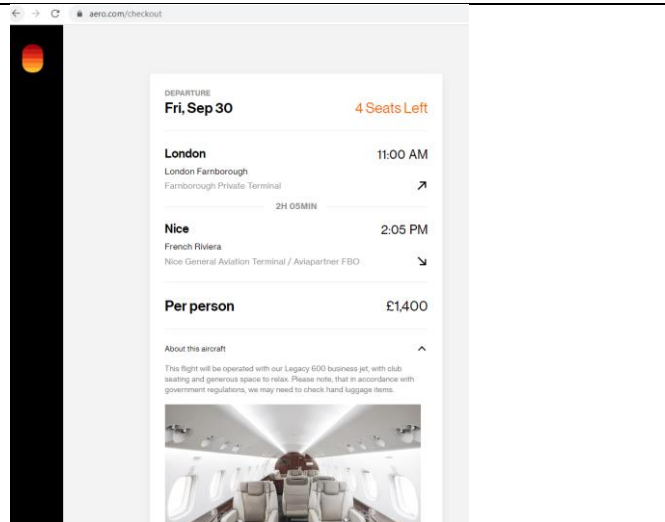
Simon Geere, CEO of Farnborough Airport Ltd, was interviewed in a travel magazine (<https://tempusmagazine.co.uk/news/interview-simon-geere-on-paving-the-way-for-sustainable->

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[private-jet-travel-as-new-ceo-of-farnborough-airport](#)). He makes various misleading claims regarding the airport's environmental and sustainability credentials. Claiming business aviation is a "springboard for reducing carbon emissions" is beyond me. He also claims that 62,000 passengers use the airport. Given there are 32,000 movements a year (a "movement" is a take-off or a landing) with an average of 2.3 passengers per flight, and that 40% of flights are empty, and assuming most customers take at least a return flight, and probably fly more than one a year, these claims don't add up. We calculate 2,000 customers use the airport and FAL hasn't denied this.

The airport also has a licence for chartered business flights only, not scheduled holiday flights... so how come I can book a flight to Nice next Friday or months ahead on a specific aircraft. That's a scheduled flight and Farnborough Airport Ltd doesn't have a licence for these flights.



Other Farnborough news

If you have tried reporting flights online using Webtrak, you will not have found it easy. This is because there is a 1hr delay in the flight being online which makes it hard to identify aircraft when they are often just a few minutes apart. The other challenge is that a lot of the flightpaths aren't shown in Webtrak so you can't see if aircraft are correctly following the flightpath or not. We've raised this with FAL/NATS and they are "looking at it". It obviously suits the airport if people can't easily submit complaints.

The airport has reached its allowable limit of 8,900 movements a year during weekends/bank holidays. This means it is restricting access at these times. Just as well Blackbushe airport is next door and Fair Oaks and Lasham are just up the road..... FAL is considering a planning application to increase weekend flights and the weight limit of jets which is currently the size of an Airbus 320.

Private jets in the news

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/aug/05/its-time-to-ban-private-jets-or-at-least-tax-them-onto-the-ground?utm_term=.62f4e13322544f3212f3fc2d93ffec6&utm_campaign=GreenLight&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=greenlight_email

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/tennis/63014086>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-62907926>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travel-truths/why-french-have-right-idea-when-comes-private-jets/>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02963-7>

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Dates for the diary:

The next FACC meeting has been delayed. It is now on Thursday 3rd November at 2.00pm. Keep track on www.facc.org.uk but there are problems with the website and pages are frequently down.

CAGNE is hosting a Q&A session on Thursday 13th October at 7.30pm. CAGNE is the commercial aviation community and environment group for Sussex, Surrey and Kent and we work with them. The event is to discuss changes at Gatwick and how noise may impact the surrounding areas.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/public-meeting-with-head-of-airspace-for-gatwick-airport-tickets-414669917887?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=escb>

Other things

If you haven't signed the petition to get the PIR done properly, please do so. The more people who sign, the greater pressure we can bring to bear <https://chng.it/D2CRHbKFGy>.

Macquarie Investments, the owner of Farnborough Airport, has invested in Southern Water. Venture Capital businesses aim to generate a significant return on investment in the short term. This is worrying for both the water and aviation sector.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/aug/09/macquarie-wades-back-into-uk-with-majority-stake-in-southern-water>

Glossary

Acronym	Term	Explanation
ACP	Airspace Change Proposal	The CAA's proposal to change the airspace that has now been implemented
AMS	Airspace Modernisation Strategy	Government's plan to re-design the UK's airspace. FASI-S or FASI-N (South and North) are part of this
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority	UK's aviation regulator
FACC	Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee	The formal consultative body to engage with Farnborough Airport (members below)
FAL	Farnborough Airport Limited	The owner of the airport (previously TAG)
GA	General Aviation	Any non-commercial aircraft such as helicopters and light aircraft. Includes some jets
LGW	London Gatwick	London Gatwick
LHR	London Heathrow	London Heathrow
MIRA	Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets	Australian venture capital business that owns Farnborough Airport
PIR	Post Implementation Review	The seventh stage of the ACP to determine if the anticipated benefits of the ACP have been achieved (running from 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023)
RBC	Rushmoor Borough Council	The Local Authority for Farnborough Airport