

Farnborough Noise Group Newsletter

May 2023

FAL's report to the CAA following the PIR is now out (<https://www.caa.co.uk/commercial-industry/airspace/airspace-change/decisions/2018-decisions/farnborough-airport-airspace-change-proposal/>). As expected, it misrepresents the data and does not address most of the issues raised by the public. For example, there is no noise data or analysis apart from that within two miles of the airport. This is something that FNG challenged for 18 months. In discussions with MPs, the CAA committed to include noise from all aircraft up to 7,000ft and 12 miles from the airport. It just isn't there! One has to bear in mind that the PIR process is conducted by the aviation industry for the aviation industry. There are no independent checks and balances. There is no way to validate the data and there is no way to present data in a way that supports a different conclusion to the one put forward by FAL. It is akin to setting the exam questions then marking your own responses.

The report is 417 pages long and it does nothing with any of the points submitted by the public other than put them in a 239 page appendix.

The PIR report relies heavily on "average data" such as the average number of flights a day. This approach smooths out the issues that people are experiencing. For example, people are at home most at weekends. This is when there are most flights (Farnborough jets, helicopters, light aircraft and commercial flights). The public therefore experience a higher degree of disturbance at a time when they most notice it. The PIR report averages everything over a month (including nights) so those disturbance events are completely lost. There is no effort in the PIR report to look at and understand peak disturbance.

The other fundamental flaw in the whole airspace change is the belief that routing flights over quiet rural areas is a "good thing" as it reduces the number of people overflown. This completely undermines the nature of rural areas that are supposed to be protected as quiet rural areas, otherwise they cease to be quiet rural areas for the benefit of the nation. It also ignores the fact that rural areas have very low background noise so the noise from aircraft is much more disruptive compared to the same noise in urban areas where the background noise level is higher. Just pushing the "noise issue" of aircraft over rural areas so fewer people complain is akin to dumping waste in rural areas "because it affects fewer people". That is not an acceptable solution.

The PIR report is long and very complex. A few people with detailed aviation knowledge are going through the report and will produce a summary. This will be shared as soon as it is available. The deadline for responses to FAL's report is 26th June.

Topics for this newsletter are:

1. General Aviation consultation
2. Farnborough's proposed new terminal
3. Noise monitoring
4. UECNA protest at the airport
5. In the press
6. Glossary

1. General Aviation consultation

The Government announced a consultation for General Aviation in order to improve national security. This involves collecting passenger information in advance of flight departures. The scope is very clear.....

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For the purpose of this consultation GA means any aircraft whether operated commercially or privately, not operating to a specific and published schedule, not subject of a written requirement to provide advance information to an immigration officer or police officer, and not making a military flight other than those carrying non-military personnel.

Farnborough airport has decided that it is not included within the scope of this consultation and it will not be responding. Private jets are an easy way for undesirable people and materials to enter the UK, as has been the case in the past. There can be no reason why FAL would not engage with this consultation. While it may not be in the interests of FAL's customers, it is in the UK's interests and FAL must support it. The link to the consultation is here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/advance-information-requirements-for-international-general-aviation-flights>

2. Farnborough's proposed new terminal

A planning application was submitted by Flexjet for a new terminal building at the airport. This was not even discussed with the FACC in advance of submission. It begs the question of the role of the FACC and the standing it is held in by FAL and other operators. FNG was not made aware of the application until a few days ago and FNG just doesn't have the capacity to engage with a planning application while evaluating the PIR. Just a cursory glance at the application shows there are a whole host of issues that are not compliant with the original S106 agreement for the airport. For example, there is a significant amount of "embedded emissions" involved with the construction and there is an assumption that there will be more vehicle travel to the airport. These are issues that contradict the airport's claim to be "carbon neutral" and conflict with the S106 agreement.

The main issue is that the current terminal building was granted to support the growth of the airport to 50,000 movements a year. It is currently operating at 32,000 movements but the application for the new terminal aims to increase the number of movements. If an additional terminal building was needed to grow to 50,000 movements, the Secretary of State may not have approved the original planning application. There is therefore no justification for a new terminal when the movements are nowhere near the capacity granted in the original planning consent. If the airport wants to grow to 50,000 movements, it should determine what is restricting this – it isn't passenger terminal space.

[23/00292/FULPP | Erection of a detached two storey building for use as a private terminal and lounge with associated offices, screening room, and flights observations, along with associated parking. | Farnborough Airport Farnborough Road Farnborough Hampshire GU14 6XA \(rushmoor.gov.uk\)](#)

Rushmoor Borough Council should delay this planning application until after the PIR response deadline so that stakeholders have time to review it properly.

3. Noise monitoring

FNG has engaged a consultant who has designed equipment to receive and record movements of all aircraft in designated areas using aircraft transponder data. This can be integrated with noise monitoring equipment so that the noise of each aircraft can be recorded. This is something FAL should have built itself to measure aircraft noise during the PIR data collection period. One can only assume the reasons why FAL is so reluctant to record noise data. FNG needs access to the calibrated noise monitoring equipment that FAL is required to provide under the S106 agreement. It is refusing

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to provide it and Rushmoor Borough Council has declined to enforce the S106 condition. Until this equipment is provided, we cannot progress this work.

4. UECNA protest at the airport

UECNA is a global aviation group that aims to limit the expansion of airports because of the noise and emissions impact of increasing flights. It arranged a global “day of action” that was supported by members of the public at Farnborough (<https://www.uecna.eu/lets-cap-aviation/>). Many airport groups, including in the UK, have tried to engage with airports and follow the prescribed consultation processes but the CAA constantly moves the goalposts and airports do their best to keep any engagement at arms-length. The inevitable consequence of this is that groups will become more disruptive, as was seen at Schiphol Airport a few months ago. Since the UK government’s stated plan is to reduce emissions by 44% by 2030, the actions of these airport groups are actually consistent with the Government’s objectives. It is really the Government who should be challenging the airports rather than leaving it to airport action groups.



5. In the press.....

Private jet sales reach highest level ever

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/01/private-jet-sales-likely-to-reach-highest-ever-level-this-year-report-says?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

More nails in SAF's coffin

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/uk-airlines-sustainable-fuel-used-cooking-oil-deforestation-palm-oil/>

Government's approach to reducing aviation's emissions is just not working

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/apr/16/we-are-flying-in-the-face-of-climate-evidence?fbclid=IwAR0cn8it93ulDQquNS7kMquiOW_ahQ9qteSyRWFpPiOAovNKYnYRUUn7Tpcw

Bristol airport expansion allowed – another contradiction of the government's climate change goals

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-bristol-65637047>

Government allowing polluters off the hook (and we all know where that leads, think water companies....)

<https://www.transportenvironment.org/discover/uk-airlines-not-paying-for-pollution/>

The impact of noise and why we need a quieter world

<https://www.chchearing.org/post/noise-expert-arline-bronzaft-inad-health-quality-life>

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6. Glossary

Acronym	Term	Explanation
ACP	Airspace Change Proposal	The CAA's process to change airspace (uses CAP1616)
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
CCC	Climate Change Committee	Independent UK body formed by government to advise policymakers
CAP1616	CAP1616	The process the CAA must follow when considering a change in airspace
FACC	Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee	The formal consultative body to engage with Farnborough Airport and all stakeholders
FAL	Farnborough Airport Limited	The owner of the airport (previously TAG). Ultimate owner is Macquarie
ICCAN	Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise	Now abolished independent group established to investigate aircraft noise
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	UN global body advising governments on climate change
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 7 th stage of the ACP to determine if the anticipated benefits have been achieved (FAL's running from 1/4/22 to 31/3/23)
RBC	Rushmoor Borough Council	The Local Authority for Farnborough Airport