

Fairoaks Airport could solve aviation overload

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Reports state Fairoaks is 'well placed' to meet additional demand for aviation in the south east.

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A longer runway and thousands more flights at Fairoaks Airport could be the answer to solving the south east's aviation overload.

Reports published by the Airports Commission on Wednesday show short, medium and long term proposals for making use of existing airport capacity and the expansions opportunities.

Fairoaks Airport in Chobham submitted its plans, which include increasing the runway size from 800 metres to 1,199. It already has permission for 120,000 fixed wing aircraft movements a year and operates only 30,000.

In its submission, it says the number of helicopter movements currently totals 5,000 with no upper limit.

The proposals states: "Fairoaks Airport is extremely well placed to be able to perform an enhanced role in meeting additional demand for aviation in the south east.

“However, rather than simply expanding the use of the airport and utilising the additional spare capacity for further general aviation use, including flying school and training use, the airport operators intend to focus on the untapped potential of the airport to support business aviation movements.

“It will also stimulate significant additional economic activity in the local area, by supporting jobs in the aviation industry and in supporting services including catering and hotels industry.”

Last month, the Woking Advertiser reported how [Fairoaks Operations Ltd planned to build a new 6,000sqm hangar on the site](#) and did not require planning permission because it was classed as general permitted development.

Nigel Eastment, who sits on the Fairoaks Airport Consultative Committee (FACC) as the Chobham Society’s representative, said it was the first time they had seen a long term plan.

He said: “The proposal is to extend the runway to allow larger aircraft to use the airport in addition to an increase of all aircraft movements, this will have a huge noise impact on all local residents.

“If the Airports Commission determines on a third runway at Heathrow, the addition of business jets and more helicopters in local airspace will make life intolerable for Chobham residents.

“The airport consistently operates under a ‘veil of secrecy’ that leads to suspicion and distrust.

“I have been asking for years for more communication from the airport on its operations, a publicised complaints procedure and better control of noise impact on residents – any progress is torturously slow.”

“The Chobham Society wants a viable airport but it must demonstrate that it is proactive in controlling its noise impact and consistent in monitoring complaints.”

Sir Howard Davies, the chairman of the Airports Commission, said the plans for all the airports across the UK will be analysed alongside comments from members of the public.

He said: “The timetable to comment is tight, as we need to move quickly to winnow down the options and reduce uncertainty for potentially affected communities.

“I encourage everyone with an interest to make their views known, to help inform our recommendations on these complex and important questions.”

Commenting on the airport proposals is open until September 27.

Contact airport.proposals@airports.gsi.gov.uk .