

Sir Howard Davies
Airports Commission
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

3rd February 2015

Dear Howard,

I am writing to you in response to your consultation on increasing the UK's long-term aviation capacity.

In our letter to you in July 2013¹ we highlighted that in assessing appropriate investments in aviation infrastructure, it is essential to recognise that aviation emissions are included in the 2050 target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% compared to 1990 levels, set in the Climate Change Act:

- Our analysis has illustrated how the 80% target could be achieved with aviation emissions at 2005 levels in 2050, and by reducing other sectors by 85%.
- Aviation emissions at 2005 levels could be achieved with fuel and operational efficiency improvements, use of sustainable biofuels and by limiting demand growth to around 60% by 2050 compared to 2005.
- Higher aviation emissions than 2005 levels in 2050 should not be planned for, since this would imply greater than 85% cuts in other sectors; there is limited confidence about the scope for this.

We therefore recommended that given the need to limit aviation demand growth in a carbon-constrained world, this should be reflected in your economic analysis of infrastructure investments. We do not have a view on airport capacity in specific locations but, given our previous analysis, it would be appropriate to assess whether investments still make sense if overall demand growth were to be limited to around 60% by 2050 on 2005 levels.

¹ <http://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/letter-to-aviation-commission>

We note that, while you were not able to complete this analysis for your consultation paper, you have recognised the need to undertake this work for your final report in summer 2015.

For this assessment you should continue to work on the basis that demand growth is limited to around 60% by 2050 compared to 2005 levels, as confirmed in the analysis in your Interim Report.

This could be done in a range of ways, either directly (e.g. by limiting demand in a balanced manner across available capacity) or indirectly (e.g. through a carbon price mechanism). In the case of demand being limited indirectly, this should be done in a way that does not distort the results of the assessment.

I am aware our two Secretariats have been working together to take this forward and would be very happy to discuss this further with you and the Commission if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Lord Deben

Chairman, Committee on Climate Change