

BALSALL PARISH COUNCIL

Comments on Airspace Change Process – Runway 15 – Birmingham Airport

1. We note that BAL accepts that an orchestrated campaign was organised for Balsall Common.
2. It is disappointing that not 1 Member of Parliament made any representations on behalf of constituents on the options (original or amended) put forward by BAL
3. According to BAL's own documents out of 59 consultees listed under groups 4-6 inclusive (page 11 of the submission) only 11 (or 10.9%!!) actually responded
4. Out of the formal consultees 5 still favoured option 5 and 4 option 6 (either as it stood or a modification of it).
5. At no time has BAL actually answered the numerous questions posed to it by the Residents Association in its original response to 'option 5'- though there are some explanations in appendix C. According to BAL's web site when the consultation process was launched and the document itself, it implied that each question posed would receive a response.
6. The technical details concerning objections to the proposed R15 departures route have been amply covered by the 3 professional pilots in their 52 page submission sent by the Residents Association
7. In our opinion BAL has not fully complied with its obligations under CAP 725. We do not consider the 'road shows' to be consultations per se. We expected BAL to provide a session where it demonstrated its proposals and then had a 'question and answer' session. Whilst the time and effort put in by BAL staff was appreciated most of these were unable to answer specific technical queries.

Specific comments on the submission made by BAL

Noise Assessment

1. We find it difficult to understand how, when differing departure routes are being considered before the splays to the south, that there is NO CHANGE in the number of people affected
2. Final paragraph – irrelevant – the new routes will be operational before 2022!! We also dispute the assertion ‘at a higher altitude’ based on present day departures and the fact that the whole purpose of the extended runway is to encourage new operators to fly further afield using heavier (passenger and cargo loads) planes which inevitably take longer to achieve height and speed after departure!!

Feedback

3. Balsall Common will be one of the most affected and villagers through the Residents Association took the trouble and effort to alert villagers of the impact of the change this is not unexpected. However this is contrary to BAL’s repeated assertions that it will listen to its neighbouring communities and **‘maintain a constant dialogue with our neighbours..... By an honest approach aimed at building understanding, trust and mutual respect’**. It certainly has not met those criteria so far as residents of Balsall Common are concerned! It refused to disclose the ‘so called obstacles’ for instance until AFTER the formal consultation period had ended and even then only after affected residents (not only from Balsall Common) had their own meeting with the CAA (organised by local MP – Caroline Spelman)

Conclusion

4. We note that in opting for its original choice BAL says it considered a route between options 5 and 6 and discounted this. Why did it not consider a route to the west of option 6 – our Option 7 (which takes flights away from the villages most affected – Hampton, Barston and Balsall Common) giving some relief to the villages from being hit by both inward (Runway 33) and departing (Runway 15) aircraft