

Councils welcome Mayor's decision to join them in opposing Heathrow

The cross-party campaign fighting airport expansion at Heathrow has welcomed an announcement by the Mayor of London that he will join a legal challenge to the Government's plans if MPs "vote Heathrow" in the House of Commons on Monday night.

The leaders of Hillingdon, Wandsworth, Richmond, and Windsor & Maidenhead councils have already signalled they will be exploring the possibilities of a judicial review of the Government's intention to build a third runway at Heathrow if the plans are approved.

Other councils in London and the south east are also expected to join that legal battle - which will centre on both the environmental damage and harm to public health if the new runway is approved.

The four councils have long argued that Heathrow is the wrong place for airport expansion in the south east. The boroughs argue that existing noise levels and already poor air quality standards render a third runway "undeliverable and inconceivable".

Cllr Ray Puddifoot, Leader of Hillingdon Council, said: "Throughout the whole consultation process, the Government has failed to address the concerns not only of the impacted communities but also the advice from the

Transport Select Committee. Now is the time for councils and groups to come together to stop this in the only way left to us - the courts. We are delighted the Mayor is joining and urge other boroughs to do the same."

Wandsworth's Leader Ravi Govindia said: "We welcome the Mayor's support for our campaign. Londoners should not be asked to suffer the extra noise and pollution from the many thousands of additional flights and vehicle movements that a third runway would bring. Heathrow is already the busiest airport in Europe and brings in more flights over built-up areas than any other European airport. There is no way to sugar this pill. The case for Heathrow expansion is unravelling before our eyes."

Cllr Gareth Roberts, Leader of Richmond Council, said: "We have always said the evidence doesn't lie. Heathrow already churns out unlawful levels of air pollution, offers woefully inadequate public transport connectivity and has Europe's worst noise footprint - and that's with just two runways. Expansion will make all these issues worse."

Cllr Simon Dudley, Leader of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, said: "While we await a Commons vote on the third runway we hope the concerns we have aired over and over again about the impact these proposals would have on the health and quality of life of our residents do not go unheard."

