



Joint press release on behalf of Plan B and Extinction Rebellion

High Court backs Heathrow Expansion

Today, 1 May, the High Court dismissed all the legal challenges to the Government's plans to expand Heathrow Airport, including the claims brought by Friends of the Earth and Plan B on the grounds of inconsistency with the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Tim Crosland, Director of Plan B and a legal adviser to Extinction Rebellion, said:

"This is a disappointing judgement by the Court, but it is increasingly difficult to see how the Government's reckless plans to expand Heathrow Airport can proceed. Following the recent Extinction Rebellion protests there is widespread recognition that we are in a state of climate and ecological emergency. The Mayor of London, the Welsh Government and more than 90 Councils have all declared a state of emergency. According to polling published yesterday two thirds of the public now recognise we are in a state of emergency and 76% would cast their votes differently to protect the planet. Acting on that emergency demands an urgent and radical reduction of emissions, which is clearly inconsistent with plans to expand aviation.

The Court has upheld Chris Grayling's surprising contention that the Paris Agreement is "irrelevant" to Government policy on climate change. It ignored the fact that the Government stated in May last year that it planned to decarbonise the economy by 2050. Instead it accepted Grayling's argument that the Committee on Climate Change ("CCC") considers the current target of 80% emissions reductions by 2050 to be consistent with the Paris Agreement. Tomorrow the CCC is expected to expose the fallacy of that position by recommending that the Government implement a target of net zero by 2050, in line with the Government's express intentions. Since that recommendation is obviously inconsistent with the expansion of Heathrow, presumably the plans will now need to be reviewed.

For as long as the Government and the Courts bury their heads in the sand over climate breakdown, and fail to safeguard the future of this country and its young people, the social contract is broken. Non violent civil disobedience is an urgent and necessary response and can already be seen to be working."

Plan B is expected to appeal against the ruling.

Ends

Notes to editors:

- A total of 11 claimants (including the Mayor of London and 5 London boroughs) brought claims against the expansion. The trial was heard between 11 and 22 March. The court has dismissed all the claims.
- **Although the Committee on Climate Change’s recommendation on net zero by 2050 will not be formally announced until 2 May, the Financial Times has already reported on it (<https://twitter.com/PickardJE/status/1122879714643914752>)**
- On 1 May 2018, Claire Perry MP, the Energy Minister, informed Parliament “*We were the first country in the world to ask how we will get to a decarbonised economy in 2050, and I would hope that we could enjoy cross-party support for something so vital.*” (<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-05-01/debates/BAD2B942-B27A-428E-87B5-6F50B699DCBE/OffshoreWindSector>)
- **The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has advised that to limit warming to the critical risk threshold of 1.5°C the whole world will need to decarbonise by 2050. The Government has assessed that if Heathrow expands, carbon dioxide emissions from UK aviation could be limited to 37,000,000 tonnes. That is inconsistent with both the IPCC analysis and the CCC recommendation.**
- On 26 June 2018, Chris Grayling, the Transport Minister, designated plans to expand Heathrow Airport as a National Policy Statement under the Planning Act 2008.
- **The Planning Act 2008, s. 5(8) requires the Secretary of State to explain how any proposal aligns to Government policy relating to climate change.**
- On 14 June 2018, Lord Deben and Baroness Brown, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee on Climate Change (the CCC), wrote to Chris Grayling in the following terms to say: “*Dear Secretary of State, The UK has a legally binding commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Change Act. The Government has also committed, through the Paris Agreement, to limit the rise in global temperature to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. We were surprised that your statement to the House of Commons on the National Policy Statement on 5 June 2018 made no mention of either of these commitments. It is essential that aviation’s place in the overall strategy for UK emissions reduction is considered and planned fully by your Department ...*”. The letter in full is published here: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CCC-letter-to-DfT-on-Airports-National-Policy-Statement.pdf>

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Website: <https://rebellion.earth/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ExtinctionRebellion/>

Twitter: [#ExtinctionRebellion](https://twitter.com/ExtinctionR)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/extinctionrebellion/>

Photos/videos: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1m1v7Cs8JFkDM1gHp45OF-NwwhLzPZJO8NEW> – What emergency? <https://rebellion.earth/the-truth/the-emergency/>

About Extinction Rebellion:

Time has almost entirely run out to address the ecological crisis which is upon us, including the 6th mass species extinction and abrupt, runaway climate change. Societal collapse and mass death are seen as inevitable by scientists and other credible voices, with human extinction also a possibility, if rapid action is not taken.

Extinction Rebellion believes it is a citizen's duty to rebel, using peaceful civil disobedience, when faced with criminal inactivity by their Government.

Extinction Rebellion's key demands are:

1. Government must tell the truth by declaring a climate and ecological emergency, working with other institutions to communicate the urgency for change.
2. Government must act now to halt biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025.
3. Government must create and be led by the decisions of a Citizens' Assembly on climate and ecological justice.

UK website: <https://rebellion.earth/>

International website: <https://xrebellion.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ExtinctionRebellion/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ExtinctionR> hashtag #ExtinctionRebellion

Declaration of Rebellion: <https://rebellion.earth/declaration/>

Get involved in Extinction Rebellion's other events

- In the UK, come to one of our [events](#), [join the Rebellion Network](#) and [let us know how you can help out](#)
- Start a group where you are – [locally in the UK](#) or [in your country around the world](#)
- Find your local group:
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=11jUqqjTHMThksd4KbvGGzb3I3Cr3PkB&usp=sharing>
- Check out the [International XR website](#), with links to the French, German, Italian and UK websites
- We are holding [Collaborative Leadership Calls](#) to help coach people to improve their leadership skills and capacities
- And while your time and energy are the most important things, if you are financially able to donate money, see our [Fundrazi](#) crowdfunder.

About Rising Up!

Extinction Rebellion is an initiative of the Rising Up! network, which promotes a fundamental change of our political and economic system to one which maximises well-being and minimises harm. Change needs to be nurtured in a culture of reverence, gratitude and inclusion; whilst the tools of civil disobedience and direct action are used to express our collective power.

Website <http://www.risingup.org.uk/>;

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