Heathrow looks set for airport expansion

New runway at UK’s largest airport is getting backing from the government

The UK government has backed a new runway at London’s Heathrow Airport, and the scheme will now be taken forward in the form of a draft national policy statement (NPS) for consultation.

The government said it was the first full-length runway in the South East of England since the Second World War.

It said that expansion costs would be paid for by the private sector, not by the taxpayer. It will be for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), as the independent industry regulator, to work with Heathrow Airport, and define operating at the airport, on the detailed design and costs to ensure the scheme remains affordable, it said.

The government said that no airport expansion would be delivered through a “through, faster planning process” under the 2008 Planning Act and 2011 Localism Act.

It said it would set out the airport scheme it wanted, along with supporting evidence, in its NPS. Public and Members of Parliament will be consulted and there will be a vote in the House of Commons in about a year’s time.

This will be followed by a planning application to the airport to the Planning Inspector, who will take a view and advise government of his decision. Final sign off will be by the Secretary of State for Transport, and then construction will start.

The Heathrow scheme includes plans for improved public transport links, and for an ultra-low emissions zone for airport vehicles by 2035. It also has a target of at least 50% of passenger journeys to the airport being made on public transport by 2035.

Cat’s Oberman to retire

Construction chief and CEO Doug Oberman will retire on 31 March 2017. Oberman has been with the US-based equipment manufacturer for over 41 years, and led the company to its highest-ever recorded sales and revenues in 2012.

The company’s board of directors have elected Jim Umpleby, Caterpillar’s group president with responsibility for energy and transportation, to succeed Oberman, Umpleby has worked for Caterpillar for 35 years and he will be joining the Caterpillar board of directors and take up the role of CEO on 1 January 2017.

Facing hydro-geological hazards

More intense planning models and more efficient machinery are necessary to meet hydrological, seismic and hydro-geological hazards initially, visits to a roadshow put on by SaMoTer.

Meetee, “We need more efficient machinery”