



## Treasury Committee

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Rt Hon George Osborne MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London SW1A 2HQ

1 June 2016

*Dear Chancellor,*

### **The economic case for airport expansion**

Governments have been talking about the need to expand London's airport capacity for nearly forty years. It is crucial that there be no further delays; the Transport Select Committee was correct last week to say that the decision is long overdue.

In November last year I tabled fourteen Parliamentary Questions in an effort to obtain further unbiased information to support the economic case set out in the Airports Commission's report. For all practical purposes these questions have not been answered. This is unacceptable.

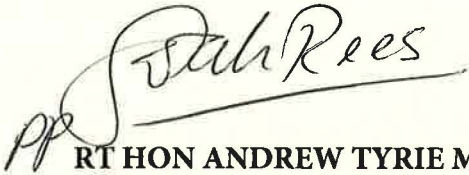
Both the public and Parliament must be able to trust the Government's decision making process. This will remain difficult for as long as the Airports Commission's economic case is not laid out fully. It is not at the moment.

The Airports Commission finds a third runway at Heathrow to have the highest potential value. This may, or may not, be the right decision on the basis of the evidence. Since it does not adequately detail the comparative risks of each of the three proposals it is not possible to be sure. This is needed, particularly when comparing a high cost, high risk and high reward project with others with potentially lower rewards but also lower risks and costs.

The opacity of the economic case is not necessarily the consequence of a lack of rigour by Sir Howard Davies' Commission. But the full analysis – likely to have been undertaken – does not feature in the Commission's Final Report.

I note your offer of a meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport. This would provide neither the public nor Parliament with the answers. A meeting may be of use. It can be held when we have a full reply.

A decision this crucial to the future of the British economy should be led from the Treasury. The Committee would be grateful if you could answer these questions and without delay. The Treasury have after all had six months to do the work required to answer them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Tyrie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined. To the left of the signature, there are two small, handwritten initials "AT".

**RT HON ANDREW TYRIE MP**  
**CHAIRMAN OF THE TREASURY COMMITTEE**