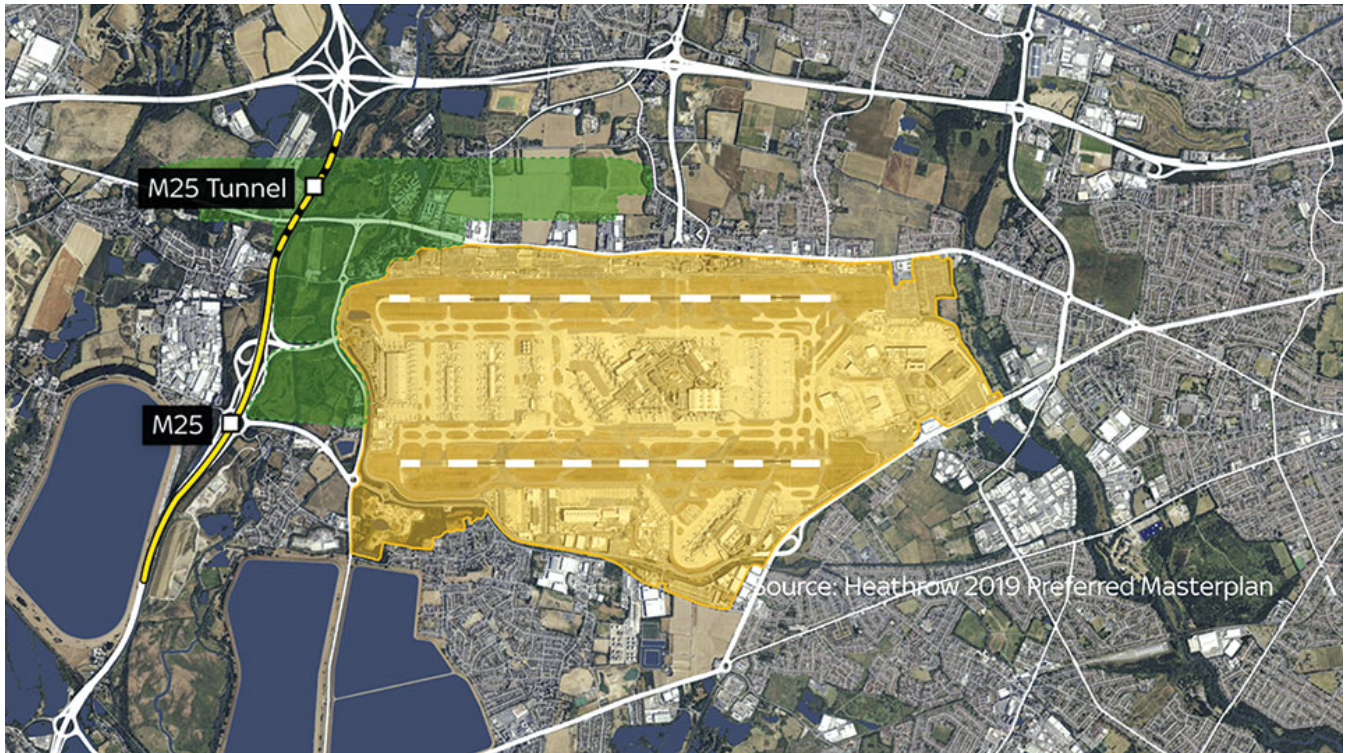


UK govt opts for Heathrow's GBP 33bn third runway plan

- A Monitor Report

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London : Heathrow's GBP 33 billion proposal for a third runway has been chosen as the plan to expand the airport, Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander announced.

Meaning, the competing idea for a shorter runway, as proposed by hotel tycoon Surinder Arora, was rejected.

Heathrow said, the project will be 100 percent privately financed, through higher airline costs, and no taxpayer money will be used to build the runway or the associated infrastructure.

Heathrow plans to spend GBP 33 billion on the third runway and GBP 15 billion to upgrade the existing airport.

However, it will require re-routing the M25 motorway and the demolition of nearby villages, Longford and Harmondsworth.

Meaning, a cheaper, alternative proposal by the billionaire hotel magnate Surinder Arora, for a shorter runway, was rejected.

The proposal is still subject to the planning process, including consultation and parliamentary scrutiny.

The full length of the runway is not known, as the layout and associated infrastructure implications will continue to be considered by the Department for Transport.

The department added the selection of Heathrow's scheme does not represent a final decision on a third runway or its design.

The government has said the additional runway could grow the economy and create more than 100,000 jobs, based on research commissioned by Heathrow Airport.

With a third runway, Heathrow could receive 150 million passengers a year, up from 83.9 million last year.