

Circling around (without taking off)

London Heathrow International Airport



(Website under construction: <http://www.bdewachter.be/?section=walking&tag=circling-around>)

The idea

- 1) Airports are very similar all around the world. Regional differences are reduced to the souvenirs that you can buy in the gift shop. In terms of the geographical landscape, it is a non-place.
- 2) The immediate surroundings of airports, however, differ greatly.
- 3) The airport cuts a hole in the landscape. That's why it is represented as a shaded surface on the map. A hole that is not, like a rabbit hole, going down into a bottomless black, but one that is going up, into an infinite blue.
- 4) In order to draw a void, you have to draw the non-void that is surrounding it. In order to describe a hole, you have to circumscribe it.
- 5) Walking transforms a line on the map into a discovery. What is discovered can be described.
- 6) In order to discover and describe an airport, you have to walk around it.

The plan

- 1) I'm inviting you to walk with me around the London Heathrow International Airport on **Friday 4 October 2013**. I will have studied the route on maps, but I will not have done it beforehand. We will discover the circle together. The walk will be 21.5 kilometers long.
- 2) After the walks around Brussels-Zaventem and Düsseldorf-Lohausen, this will be the third in a series of airport walks.
- 3) We will not walk directly around the fence, but along the roads and paths that are close to the airport.
- 4) The focus will be on the immediate surroundings: houses, nature, people, signs...
- 5) There is one important basic rule: **ignore the airport! Don't mention the planes!**
- 6) We will describe our discovery together, with pictures, titles and short pieces of text.

Practicalities

Getting there

The meeting point is the Hatton Cross subway station on the Picadilly line, at **10h UK time**. There are two exits. We'll meet at the exit that goes towards the bus stops. **Don't be late.**

Hatton Cross is a 50 minute ride from central London, approximately. Everybody will go by her/his own means.

For the people coming from Brussels, you can take the Eurostar at 7h56 in the morning on the same day. I will go already the night before, the one of 19h52. It will be impossible to get back on the same day, so you'll have to organize a place for Friday night in London. I will go back with the Eurostar of 16h04 on Saturday. The cheapest Eurostar ticket is 88 euro both ways (for the early bookers).

Time schedule

10:00 Welcome speech and start of the walk

CIRCLING AROUND THE AIRPORT – 21.5 km

19:00 (estimate): Closing the circle

Food

We will have lunch at a local pub, we they have soup, salad, warm baguettes, jacket potatoes, pies and other meals. All other drinks and snacks you should bring with you (although I'm quite sure we will pass some shops on our way).

Inscription

The number of people will be limited to 20. Please fill in the following Doodle if you want to inscribe: <http://www.doodle.com/bd3uyyq2i3kmy9dy>. Fill in your name or e-mail or both (if you don't fill in your e-mail in the Doodle, **send me an e-mail message so that I can contact you**).

Describing the discovery

All airport-hikers are asked to participate in documenting the walk.

I will take a camera with me, and you can ask me to take pictures of whatever you like during the walk, except of planes or the airport. You're free to bring your own camera as well, but please respect the basic rule and don't take pictures of airplanes.

Afterwards, I will join all the pictures on Dropbox. I will ask you to choose a few pictures and you have to give a title to each of them, in English. If you feel like, you can also write a short text that goes with one or more of those pictures.

I will assemble all your contributions into a report: **our personal description of the airport.**

Contact

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