

## Common Starling utilising the Ibis Cypress tree to Roost

### Introduction

Starlings present a significant risk to air safety and, due to their behaviour in flocks when encountering aircraft, have resulted in some of the most catastrophic outcomes to civil aircraft including loss of life. Their presence on Heathrow Airport is linked to the proximity of roost sites hence activities have been undertaken to disperse and remove roosting areas in close proximity to the airport whenever encountered. Conifer trees were removed from the Heathrow Compass Centre Car Park, a Monkey Puzzle Tree on Bath Road and deterrence from the Central Terminal Area have all successfully reduced the presence of Starlings on and around the aerodrome. Despite these actions and the deterrence and preventative measures implemented at Heathrow. Some Starlings continue to roost in close proximity to the airport and strikes at Heathrow continue to occur.

### IBIS Roost

Starlings have been recorded using the Pine tree outside the Ibis Hotel from December 2019. Routine monitoring has identified use of the tree by up to 453 birds between August and February each subsequent year with birds also recorded leaving the roost and entering the airfield to attempt to feed. Dispersal by the wildlife control team on the airfield then results in birds being able to move only a short distance to rest and return to continue their attempts to feed. The pre-roost gathering of birds in the air (murmuration) has been recorded flocking over the airfield resulting in direct conflict with aircraft.

### Options

It may be possible to disperse birds from the tree as they arrive to roost via the use of pyrotechnics (unlikely to be appropriate for use at a hotel or adjacent to a major highway), or bird scaring lasers (risk of dazzling to aircraft pilots would need a full assessment). As such, pruning the tree to remove the density may minimise use of the tree by Starlings or removal of the tree to completely prevent its use would be preferable. The objective would be to move the roost further from the airfield so as to minimise the risks faced by aircraft operating in to or out from Heathrow.