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Case Ref. 2032278

Appeal by BAA Ltd and Stansted Airport Ltd following the refusal by Uttlesford District Council of planning application UTT/0717/06/FUL

Summary Proof of Evidence on behalf of Stop Stansted Expansion

Planning Considerations

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1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1.1 My name is Geoffrey Gardner. I am a Chartered Town Planner with 30 years experience. I am a Director of Hives Planning Limited and will give evidence on planning policy to support dismissal of the Appeal. I have a Master of Science Degree in Policy Studies from Bristol University, a Diploma in Management Studies and I am also a Member of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management. Until April 2006 I was Head of Planning at Essex County Council. I have produced statutory plans and policy documents; given evidence at many planning inquiries and participated at examinations-in-public; chaired teams preparing strategies including urban expansion in growth areas and been on Government policy working parties. I am instructed by 'Stop Stansted Expansion' to present evidence on its behalf at the Public Inquiry on planning matters.

2. THE APPEAL PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Uttlesford DC gave planning permission (UTT/1000/01/OP) in 2003 for expansion of Stansted Airport subject to a limit of 25 million passengers per annum (mppa) (Condition MPPA1) and a limit on air traffic movements of 241,000 air traffic movements (ATMs) per annum (Condition ATM1) which included a limit of 22,500 commercial ATMs.
- 2.2 The appeal lodged in 2006 by the Appellants was for the removal of Condition MPPA1 and variation of Condition ATM1 to increase aircraft numbers to 264,000 ATMs pa.

3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Background

3.1 At first glance the case for increased usage of the existing runway seems strong: there is the ATWP¹ in 2003, and no constraint in the emerging East of England

¹ Air Transport White Paper [CD/87].

Plan (EoE Plan)². However the ATWP says that “it does not authorise ... any particular development”, and the emerging EoE Plan says it is not its job to encourage or otherwise the expansion of Stansted (Policy E8 merely notes what the ATWP says). Both documents say that environmental concerns must be addressed and surface access is a matter of great importance. Moreover, other Government policy documents and the growing concern of climate change and sustainability make the ATWP seem from another age. If the Government are serious about tacking climate change now is not the time to be encouraging air travel (and the attendant increase in car travel to get to the airport) through approving a major increase in Stansted’s capacity.

The development plan

3.2 The requirement of the 2004 Planning Act³ is that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan comprises RPG 9, Essex Structure Plan and Uttlesford Local Plan. None of these documents encourage an enlarged Stansted but, rather, have policies on environmental protection which are not met by the application. I share the views of Uttlesford DC that the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan, in particular Policy BIW 9 of the Structure Plan in the following terms:

- noise impact on the local community;
- amenity of occupiers of buildings in the vicinity;
- cognitive development of school children;
- quality of life, including a lack of proper assessment;
- air quality and effect on Hatfield Forest and East End Wood;
- lack of adequate demonstration of economic benefits to outweigh other factors.

3.3 Other Structure Plan and Local Plans’ policies are relied upon to support the case

² Government ‘s Proposed Changes to the Draft East of England Plan, December 2006 [CD/76].

³ Section 38.

that the development is not in accordance with the development plan, as set out in my proof of evidence.

- 3.4 Other witnesses will give evidence on the impacts on matters of environmental importance.

Other material considerations

- 3.5 The emerging **EoE Plan**, as now proposed by Government modifications, has yet to be adopted. The modifications propose no limit on capacity and recognise the content of the Air Transport White Paper (2003) (ATWP). Policy E8 does require a surface access strategy and adequate environmental safeguards. Policy T12 requires a shift to more sustainable travel and supporting text seeks improvements to surface access. I shall return to transportation below.

- 3.6 The **ATWP** certainly supports the proposal although quite rightly says that it cannot authorise development. Clearly this is a function of the planning system. The provision of adequate transportation infrastructure and general impacts of a larger airport are recognised.

Claimed economic benefits

- 3.7 The economic benefits of a larger Stansted are mentioned in the ATWP and heavily relied upon by BAA. However, there is little quantification and the proposed expansion to a second runway may be more significant, albeit with significant disbenefits.
- 3.8 Whilst there is a significant claim in the ATWP and EoE Plan that an enlarged Stansted brings economic benefits to the area, there is little evidence to quantify and substantiate this claim. Much seems to rest on a second runway, rather than the current proposal. Although already the third largest UK airport, Stansted has a very small share of trade passing through UK airports. On and off-site employment increases are described in the Planning Statement as “modest”, and more leisure travellers will leave than arrive.

Climate change

3.9 The importance that the Government attaches to the problem of climate change is evident in The White Paper ‘Our Energy Future’, which sets down the target of reducing carbon emissions by 60% by 2050 (compared to the 1990 Kyoto baseline). The Draft ‘Planning and Climate Change’ supplement to PPS 1 published 13 December 2006 is evidence of emerging Government policy and therefore valid to consider; and the ‘Climate Change Bill’, presented to Parliament on 13 March 2007 which, amongst other things, sets out a statutory framework and timescales for achieving the 60% target. These documents reinforce the point that climate change impacts are a material consideration in relation to this planning application – something which BAA has always sought to dismiss. BAA has not even provided base data or projections for Stansted CO2 emissions.

3.10 Other SSE witnesses will deal with this topic.

The comprehensive approach

3.11 BAA made an application to remove any cap on passenger numbers. Perhaps in recognition of the impact this would have they have proposed a limit of 35 mppa. Past practice has been to make incremental planning applications seeking to demonstrate that each has little extra impact than the previous scheme. Nothing prevents a repeat of this process when another application could soon be made to remove any 35 mppa limit. The Inquiry should be into the maximum use of the runway and judge the impacts accordingly. The capacity is between 45 mppa and 50 mppa.

3.12 The ATWP⁴ and subsequent DfT Guidance require airport operators to produce long-term airport masterplans to guide development proposals. Uttlesford DC in the Scoping Opinion required a full masterplan. Only an ‘interim masterplan’ has been produced by BAA which fails to describe long-term development nor describe proposals for “development of airport up to 2015 in some detail” . With

⁴ paragraph 12.8.

proposals for Runway 2, a full masterplan and a surface access strategy imminent, this appeal for Runway 1 is being considered in a vacuum.

Transportation

- 3.13 I have carried out a policy review of material concerned with transportation and sustainability. The over-riding theme is that of reducing the need to travel, and requiring more sustainable forms of transport. The lack of a full surface access strategy prevents proper evaluation of transportation proposals but information gleaned from the submitted material clearly indicates that the proposals are contrary to the development plan and other policy documents including 'A New Deal for Transport White Paper' DETR (1998), PPG 13 Transportation (2001) and PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (February 2005).
- 3.14 With regard to the policy theme of reducing the need to travel (see for example PPS 1 and PPS 13) it is obviously not only the principal purpose of the application to increase travel (by 10 million passengers a year) and as a consequence also to attract passengers to travel to the airport in cars. Information on bus and coach travel shows little change in percentage terms from the current situation and the massive increase in passenger numbers therefore results in a corresponding increase in car travel.
- 3.15 There is little information on rail travel but any proposals for increased capacity seem limited. BAA say that there will be little difference to the scale envisaged for the 25mppa level. Essex CC seeks to make this a central part of their case.
- 3.16 Other SSE witnesses will deal with transportation comprehensively.

In conclusion the proposals are contrary to the development plan and although supported in principle elsewhere, there are sufficient matters of detail, large and small, to justify dismissal of this appeal. Furthermore, the ATWP must now be regarded as one of many policy documents, and more recent concerns on issues including climate change are of overwhelming importance.