

STOP STANSTED EXPANSION UPDATE

An environmental catastrophe!



"An environmental catastrophe"

That was the verdict reached on a second runway at Stansted – not by Stop Stansted Expansion – but by the last Stansted Airport Public Inquiry. The judgement was that any second runway at Stansted – in any position or location – would be an environmental catastrophe for the local area and for the local community.

That judgement is every bit as true today as it was then – which is why we must vigorously oppose BAA's latest plans for Stansted until we have – once again – seen off the threat from BAA to our community.

As the arguments against BAA's expansion plans for Stansted continue to mount up, the Government is about to embark upon a review of its 2003 Air Transport White Paper.

The results of that review are not expected until towards the end of 2006 but there are already signs that the Government is having second thoughts about its support for unlimited expansion of UK air travel and airport capacity.

In the meantime, BAA will be doing everything possible to press ahead with its plans, knowing that the tide is turning against it.

Our priority, as a local community, is to continue to stand firm against BAA's plans every step of the way.

Even if this were to lead us into another Public Inquiry, we can take considerable comfort from the outcome of the last Inquiry which capped Stansted at 25 million passengers a year (the current limit) and concluded that a second runway would be:

"Nothing less than a catastrophe in environmental terms, a wholly unprecedented environmental and visual disaster."

There is no reason for a different conclusion today so please, make your voice heard. You can do this by writing to your local councillor, your MP or your local newspaper and you can support the campaign by joining SSE today.

See back page for details.

The tide of the arguments is increasingly turning against BAA

- increasing awareness of the consequences of **climate change**; air travel is now the fastest growing contributor
- further evidence of adverse **health impacts** of aviation upon those who live around airports
- realisation that the **local infrastructure** would never be able to cope with an extra million Stansted passengers a week
- growing concerns over both the **price of oil** and the long term stability of the oil market
- greater recognition of the **adverse economic** impacts of cheap air travel and a realisation that subsidies and tax breaks must be ended
- a new **legal obligation** on planning authorities to endorse development only where it is sustainable
- increasing doubts about the **financial viability** of BAA investing £4 billion to handle more 'penny' flights
- growing pressure for a break-up of **BAA's monopoly** stranglehold over London's airports

SEE INSIDE:
for more information on what BAA's plans would mean for our local community and why we must remain united in fierce opposition to BAA's plans at every stage.
See back page for what you can do to help.

Our Community – C

BAA's Grand Plan

Stansted is already Britain's third busiest airport having expanded dramatically in recent years, from just 4 million passengers in 1995 to 22 million in 2005. Stansted currently has planning permission to handle 25 million passengers a year.

Only Heathrow and Gatwick are now bigger than Stansted but Stage 1 of BAA's plans would enable Stansted to overtake Gatwick and Stage 2 would make Stansted bigger than today's Heathrow.

Stage one

Stage 1 of the plan is to make maximum use of the existing runway enabling Stansted to handle about 40 million passengers a year.

If approved, much of this could be achieved quite quickly because it would not need major airport construction works. By far the biggest challenge, however, would be to build the proper road and rail

links necessary to accommodate a virtual doubling in the number of passengers travelling to and from the airport. BAA would need to pay for most of this and so, not surprisingly, claims that the existing roads and rail links can cope with a doubling of throughput.

Stage two

Stage 2 would comprise a second runway, a new terminal and all the supporting infrastructure necessary for the airport to handle about 80 million passengers a year. (As an indication of scale, Heathrow presently handles 67 million.)

Stage 2 would be an enormous construction project, costing an estimated £4 billion. Although there are serious question marks over the financial viability of this project, BAA says that it aims to have a second Stansted runway built by 2013.



Who decides?

BAA intends to apply for planning approval for its Stage 1 plans in Spring 2006. Uttlesford District Council is the planning authority for the airport and will decide whether to approve or reject BAA's application.

If Uttlesford refuses the application, BAA would almost certainly appeal. This would lead to a Public Inquiry being set up to consider BAA's proposals.

BAA is aiming to seek approval for its Stage 2 plans in 2007.

These plans are of such a scale and so contrary to local and regional planning policy that a Public Inquiry would be inevitable.

Whitehall

Whitehall supports BAA's plans – at least in principle – but the East of England Regional Assembly, Essex, Herts and Suffolk County Councils and all local District Councils, including Uttlesford, oppose a second runway and would only support further growth on the existing runway if BAA were able to show that this could be achieved on a sustainable basis.

Satisfying the prerequisite that any further Stansted expansion must be sustainable will undoubtedly be a very tough test for BAA to achieve.



Consultation overload

If airports were built of paper, Stansted would already be the world's largest airport thanks to the mountain of paper which BAA is bombarding us with under the guise of public consultation.

Past experience has shown that BAA simply does not listen to the views of local residents but this does not deter BAA from going through the pretence of consultation.

We've already had a glossy consultation brochure on the Stage 1 planning application and another on BAA's "Draft Interim Master Plan" – a document which starts by admitting that it actually isn't even a realistic or proper plan at all!

Still to come is a consultation on BAA's preferred location for a second runway and a consultation

on road and rail schemes. We'll then see BAA's Stage 1 planning application, yet another 'Stansted Airport Master Plan' and then a consultation on Stage 2!

There is more cause to be amused than to be overawed by all of this. At each stage, SSE will provide advice via our website on what it all means and how to respond.

Our Responsibility!



Noise impact

Increased aircraft noise, day and night, would be one of the inevitable consequences if BAA's grand plans came to pass.

Using the existing runway to maximum capacity would result in over 5,000 flights a week. A second runway would take this to 10,000 flights a week – nearly three times as many as today.

Noise measurement is a complex and highly technical business and this enables BAA to use various 'smoke and mirrors' tricks to obscure the true picture in attempting to persuade us that expanding Stansted will make very little difference to us in terms of noise. Don't be fooled by this.

BAA claims that aircraft noise is not a significant problem at levels below 63 dBA_{leq} but the World Health Organisation (WHO) specifies an upper limit of 50 dBA_{leq} to protect communities from moderate noise annoyance during the day and an indoors limit of 35 dBA_{leq} to protect people from noise disturbance during the night.

There are also some serious shortcomings in BAA's method of calculating projected noise levels, for example, it excludes the busy early morning and late evening peak

periods, as well as excluding ground noise, and it uses an average of north-easterly and south-westerly runway operations.

The WHO recommends even lower noise thresholds for rural areas, but here again BAA ignores the WHO conclusions and recommendations.

To add insult to injury, BAA refuses to recognise that it has any obligation to compensate local householders unless they are subjected to aircraft noise in excess of 66 dBA_{leq}!

For schools, the WHO and the internationally influential American Standard Institute recommend 35 dBA_{leq} as the maximum ambient classroom noise level based on extensive academic research which shows that intermittent aircraft noise has an adverse impact upon children's education – leading to lapses in concentration, known as 'jet pause', and reducing the intelligibility of lessons.

A number of schools in the vicinity of Stansted Airport are already subject to ambient classroom noise in excess of 35 dBA_{leq} – a situation which is already unacceptable and which would obviously become much worse if there were to be three times as many flights.

Cheap flights cost the earth

Air travel is now the fastest growing cause of global warming and the most environmentally damaging form of travel. The present rate of growth is unsustainable.

A Boeing 747 produces almost 300 tonnes of carbon dioxide on a flight from London to New York.

The Prime Minister describes global warming as a bigger threat than global terrorism and has committed Britain to achieving a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 – a target which will be totally impossible to achieve if air travel continues to grow at anything like its present rate.

The UK accounts for only 1% of the world's population, but for one sixth of all international air travel, more than 80% of this for leisure purposes.

No single country or industry can solve the problem of global warming on its own but we all have a duty to future generations to play our part.

The economics of the madhouse

The airline industry's tax exemptions – paying no fuel duty and no VAT – are the main reason why it is possible to fly from Stansted to almost anywhere in Europe for less than the price of a train ticket to London.

Whilst road users paid over £40 billion to the UK Exchequer last year in fuel duty, excise duty and VAT, airlines paid under £1 billion in air passenger duty, the only tax that applies to air travel and which has not been increased for more than 10 years.

This unreal situation is compounded at Stansted because of its cross-subsidisation by Heathrow and Gatwick airports, and even then it is car parking and not landing fees which are the biggest

contributor to BAA revenues at Stansted.

The unrealistically low cost of air travel is also the main reason for the UK's soaring balance of payments deficit on overseas travel and tourism – which reached a staggering £18.5 billion in 2004.

Stansted is overwhelmingly a leisure airport – with leisure passengers outnumbering business passengers by five to one.

As was recently pointed out, you don't need a Nobel Prize in economics to question the benefit to the UK of subsidising an Irish airline to buy American planes in order to transport vast numbers of British people to spend their money in France and Spain.

It's the economics of the madhouse.

Think about it...

To get some idea of what would happen to this local community if a second runway were to be built, just think of the area around Heathrow – and then add some – remembering that Heathrow presently handles 67 million passengers whereas Stansted could be handling over 80 million.

Think of the number of people who live and work around Heathrow – then add some.

Think of the number of houses around Heathrow – then add some.

Think of the number of office blocks, hotels, factory units, warehouses, distribution centres and other business premises around Heathrow –

then add some.

Above all, think of the road traffic around Heathrow – and the associated congestion and pollution – then add some.

If you don't like the Heathrow comparison, try Gatwick; Stansted would be two and a half times bigger.

Now think of your family, especially your children, because – with a second Stansted runway – all this would happen within a single generation, dramatically changing the local environment and character of this community.

BAA will of course employ expensive consultants who will

produce projections to show that not a single extra house will need to be built, not a single extra decibel of noise will result and barely a single tree will need to be cut down.

People will reach the airport as if by magic so there will be no extra traffic and no need for BAA to invest in any expensive new rail links or road improvements.

Paying the piper, BAA will call the tune and its expensive consultants will dance accordingly.

We'll be asked to believe that Stansted will be an invisible airport with silent aircraft bringing benefits to all. Think about it.

Together we can defeat BAA – but we need your support

SSE has brought together a host of talented local volunteers from all walks of life and the campaign team now includes expertise which can deal with most aspects of BAA's expansion plans for Stansted.

We have a powerful and winnable case but the team cannot always do the job on its own which is why we are asking you to support SSE by becoming a member.

It would be unforgivable if we were to lose this campaign simply because we did not have the necessary funds to pay for legal proceedings, external consultants

and other specialist independent advice as necessary.

Whether in the Courts, in the City, in Parliament or at Public Inquiry, our aim is always to present the case on behalf of the local community against massive expansion of Stansted Airport in the strongest and most professional terms.

Please play your part in protecting our precious local heritage and environment for future generations.

For just £10 you can support the campaign by joining Stop Stansted Expansion today.

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOUR HELP

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/other): _____ Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____

e-mail: _____



STANDING ORDER MANDATE

Please pay: Stop Stansted Expansion

Bank: Lloyds TSB, North Street, Bishop's Stortford. Account no: 1310292. Bank Sort Code: 30-90-84

The sum of £5 £10 *other amount £ commencing on: / / 200

and on this same day monthly thereafter until further notice.

Please provide your bank details below and return this completed form to SSE (see address at foot of page)

To: _____ Bank Sort Code:

Address _____ Account No:

Account Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

MAKE A DONATION

I enclose a donation of £ (£10 qualifies you as a member for a year)

Please make cheques payable to 'Stop Stansted Expansion' and send with this form to SSE (see address below)

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/other): Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____ e-mail: _____

