

**EXTRAORDINARY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE held at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 2.30 pm on
3 JULY 2006**

Present:- Councillor C A Cant – Chairman
Councillors E C Abrahams, C M Dean, C D Down, R F Freeman
E J Godwin, R T Harris, S C Jones, J I Loughlin, J E Menell, and
M Miller.

Officers in attendance:- R Harborough, J M Mitchell, C Nicholson, J G Pine
and C Roberts.

DC46

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J F Cheetham, and
A R Thawley.

Members declared the following interests:-

Councillor C D Down a personal interest as a member of CPRE.

Council C M Dean a personal interest as a member of the National Trust.

Councillor C A Cant a personal interest as the Council's representative on
Uttlesford PCT.

Councillor J E Menell a personal interest as a non executive director of the
Uttlesford PCT.

Councillor M Miller a personal interest as a member of the Great Dunmow
Town Council.

Councillor J I Loughlin a personal interest as a member of the Stansted Parish
Council.

DC47

**PLANNING APPLICATION 0717/06/FUL STANSTED AIRPORT –
PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

1 Mr S Latham – Thaxted Parish Council

Mr Latham explained that he was a parish councillor of Thaxted and
represented the view of most Thaxted residents in being against further
expansion of the Airport. The expansion from 25 to 35 mppa would mean an
increase from 400 to 700 flights a day over Thaxted giving no respite at all
from what was at present peak time disturbance. The busiest time (10.15 –
11.45pm) currently had one flight every two minutes, which would be added to
by the extra 200+ flights a day.

Thaxted had many listed buildings, unsuited to double glazing, where
residents were worse exposed to noise. Also, cargo flights disturbed sleep
between midnight and 6am and made it impossible to leave windows open,
and airport related lorries/traffic rattled through the town at all hours, the
Essex County Council having refused a weight restriction.

If the application were not refused further applications would follow and the airport would totally blight the quality of life for the people of Thaxted.

(No questions)

2 Mr P Jones – Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

Mr Jones conveyed the objection of the Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council to further expansion on the general grounds of the need for timely investment in massive infrastructure to support the airport and the consequential degeneration of the area into a congested urban sprawl with destruction of the greenery and peace to the detriment of the parishioners. The particular grounds of objection and assurances required were:-

Water, situation worsened by over-extraction, low rainfall and higher temperatures; inadequacy of the current supply for the needs of the local communities which should come before those of the airport.

Assurances required Detailed analysis to ensure that additional abstraction does not cause other negative effects such as lowering of the water table or ground shrinkage. The needs of local communities must take precedence and, if necessary, be protected by stringent water usage restrictions at the airport.

Noise, parish is the more vulnerable because of its normally low ambient noise levels. Day time breaches of flight paths cause problems and sleep is disturbed by night flights and heavy use of shoulder periods. Ground noise is a problem for much of the parish despite BAA's expenditure to reduce it. Burton End suffers badly from noise, property sale blight and the threat of dismemberment.

Assurances required Flight paths in the South East and specifically for London Stansted must be clarified and should not be permitted over this parish. Strict monitoring is required with more effective punishment for breaches.

Night flights should be stopped. The overriding issue must be the well-being of the community.

The insidious impact of ground noise needs further investigation with a commitment to act with a timely schedule.

The method of calculating projected noise levels used by BM is unsatisfactory given it excludes the key shoulder periods and uses runway averaging.

Further the recommendations of the WHO on upper limits and those for rural areas are ignored which is damaging for all but especially perhaps children. Adherence to the WHO recommended limits should be enforced.

Health and Education of children is threatened by aircraft

Assurances required

The current and predicated effects of poor air quality on those with weak cardiovascular systems must be quantified.

An analysis of the prescription habits for stress-related disorders to determine the likely impact of greater noise levels.

The effects of airport expansion on the cognitive development of children, especially in terms of long-term memory and reading deficits- Independent, comprehensive monitoring and data projections relating to these issues should be required in accordance with WHO recommendations. Based on the projected growth, what changes must be sought from the present night-time activity defined as between 11 pm to 7 am?

The capacity of the two major hospitals and their distance from the airport (Princess Alexandra at Harlow is twelve miles away and Addenbrooks at Cambridge is twenty three miles distant) both pose problems especially in the event of a major incident. Even ignoring this issue, there are major concerns over the anticipated growth in residential development and numbers of employees, with primary and hospital capacity already under strain.

Surface Access Huge numbers of additional passenger movements per annum are implied requiring substantial costly increase in road and rail transport capacity. The Parish suffers rat-runs, a squeeze on commuter services and road movements of freight destroying the night quiet.

Assurances required

A stringent review of the statistical basis on which BAA predicates its forecasts for rail and road transport. Sir Humphrey Appleby style calculations are not acceptable.

Heavy committed and timely investment in public and road transport -vague promises to act if necessary are not acceptable.

A commitment to tackle the growth of rat-runs on local roads and the concomitant dangers which accompany this issue.

The planning authority should bear down on night flights and associated car movements as was promised in the 2003 Air Transport White Paper.

Conclusion

The variation of conditions requested by BAA should be refused but, If approval is considered, this should be dependent upon committed investment and safeguards to protect local communities.

Questions

Members asked questions about the surveys of rat-runs undertaken by the airports, with a view to whether the terms of the S106 agreement had been adhered to.

Mr Pine said that this issue had been awaiting the opening of the A120. A Member expressed concern that leaving the survey until September might skew the results to a time when the airport was quieter. The Chairman asked that Mr Pine take this point on board.

3 **Mr J Hudson – Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council** (waived his opportunity to speak)

4 **Ms A Thomas – Haverhill Town Council**

Ms Thomas said that Haverhill supported the expansion of Stansted Airport but wished to see the transport links between the airport and Haverhill improved. The town benefited in employment terms from the Airport. Over flying did occur but the European Union regulations on aircraft noise had improved the intrusiveness of planes a lot. Local residents fly from and work at the airport but there are minimal plans to enhance road and passenger transport links which should be a condition of planning consent.

Questions

In answer to a question from a Member Ms Thomas said she was unable to tell exactly from which direction aircraft lights were coming.

5 **Mr T Allen – Takeley Parish Council**

Mr Allen said that Takeley would be in the front line of expansion effects and they objected to the proposed change in the number of passenger movements per annum. They had received no information from the Airport about the rat-run surveying although they had made strong representations about this. Takeley would submit its own summary of these effects soon.

6 **Mr T Jackson – Chrishall Parish Council**

Mr Jackson referred to a comprehensive letter of objection prepared and sent to the Planning Department by the Clerk of the Chrishall Parish Council. (This letter will be summarised in the report to be prepared by the Planning Department in due course.)

He explained that the Chrishall Parish Council was objecting to the application due to the detrimental effects that the proposed increase in flights would have upon their community in terms of noise pollution, air pollution, traffic congestion, aircraft carbon emissions, and over use of natural resources. The application was fundamentally flawed because the majority of airport traffic at Stansted is artificially subsidised, therefore the projected increases in passenger demand were not economically sound and the application failed to take into account the likely effect of fuel price increases which would increase the cost of air travel.

The Parish Council was concerned that 2003 figures had been used as a baseline for modelling predictions about surface access, waste, water, air quality, third party risk, employment, and economic effects. Modelling comparisons made with an already polluted baseline would generate skewed results. CPC was concerned that the specialist consultants and advisers for air noise, climate change and energy were in fact BAA and urged Uttlesford to seek advice on these aspects of the Environmental Impact Assessment from independent specialists. The Parish Council was objecting to the planning

application because the environmental impact assessment was clearly not based on sound science. Impacts BAA described as acceptable would in fact be unacceptable to the people whose enjoyment of life below the flight paths and stacking circles was disrupted.

The Parish Council considered the proposal to remove limits on passenger numbers at Stansted was completely at odds with the principle of sustainable development and was not convinced that development of a voluntary emissions trading system would be adequate to mitigate the environmental consequences of the proposed increases in air traffic. The proposed emissions trading system did not yet exist, therefore it could not be assessed. The environmental impact report stated that growing industries which include aviation, were to be catered for within a reducing CO2 total. CPC urged UDC to impose a local environment tax which could be used to mitigate the environment impacts of the airport by funding energy reduction initiatives within the district. This would provide a measurable means of mitigating the CO2 emissions generated by the aircraft. Alternatively a toll system at the entrance to the airport could be used to charge airport users directly : The cumulative effect of air pollution was not considered in the report. Chrishall was under the flight paths, turning circles and stacking circles for Stansted, Luton, Cambridge, Duxford, military aircraft, private jets and helicopters. An increase in the number of flights both at Stansted and Luton will increase the air pollution which Chrishall will be subjected to. Further the synergistic effect of a combination of pollutants had not been assessed and an appropriate consultant should be engaged to address this.

Uttlesford currently had very low unemployment. The non-technical report stated that the focus of employment recruitment would be north and east London. Therefore, the majority of the new work force would be travelling to Stansted from London. This would have a direct negative effect on highways, public transport and pollution levels.

BAA had stated that there would be no need for financial investment in infrastructure as there would be 'minimal ' effect. More than 80% of employees and 65% of passengers arrived at the airport by car or taxi. This trend was unlikely to change given the lack of investment in public transport. This would, based on BAA's own statistics, lead to 3040 more employees travelling by car to work, and 7.8 million passengers travelling to the airport by car or taxi. Even with significant car sharing, this would produce approximately 2 million additional vehicle movements. This does not include deliveries to the airport or ancillary services. This was a significant effect and required further research concerning road infrastructure. Essex was already the driest county in the UK. The Hadleigh centre had forecast a reduction of 19% in Essex rainfall by 2050 as a consequence of climate change.

BAA was maintaining that an increase in passenger numbers would have minimal effect on water conditions locally. This contradicted the 2003 environmental impact assessment conducted by Halcrow, undertaken on behalf of DfT which highlighted water supply as a major environmental issue in relation to Stansted expansion and concluded that Essex water resources were virtually fully committed without expansion of the airport, that large

increases in passenger numbers would significantly increase airport demand for water; that even with supply and demand water management and water saving technology, it might be difficult to meet demand.

The Generation 1 Environmental Statement appeared to pay lip service to the concept of sustainable development but failed to deliver credible and robust solutions to the environmental impacts which the proposed increase in air traffic movement and passenger numbers would undoubtedly create. Chrishall PC therefore urged Uttlesford DC in the strongest possible terms to refuse variation of Condition ATM1 and enforce Condition MPPA1.

Questions

In answer to a question from a Member Mr Harborough assured the meeting that the Council had the latest figures on the health impact of the airport. Another Member commented that the peak hours agreement seemed to be ineffective to protect residents from disturbance.

7 Mr S Bolter – Hedingham and Maplestead Ward

Mr Bolter explained that he was representing his ward and the Liberal Democratic Group of Braintree District Council and objecting to expansion of the airport and more flights on both global and local environmental grounds. Global warming unrestrained would cause starvation, mass migration and wars over food and water. Aircraft emissions of CO₂ and high altitude water vapour caused global warming and the greenhouse effect. Locally his ward was adversely affected by noise from low and night-time aircraft. Government and the Aviation Industry had failed to consider local people. Stacking remained over land, instead of over the North Sea; Approaches and departures were not fanned out to spread the burden; The night flight period was to remain from 23 :30 to 06.00 only; The night flight limit for the future was greater than the current usage; There was to be no control over flights during the shoulder period; Operators were allowed unrealistic schedules which regularly forced many flights into the night period without them counting to the night flight allocation. World Health organisation guidelines stated that noise levels of 50 dB A leq could cause mental health problems. BAA had refused to publish realistic predictions for the 50 dB A leq noise contour only contours for unrealistic flight paths which are clearly inconsistent with radar images of actual paths; BAA had tried to deceive residents by referring to thresholds for the perception of increased loudness and unjustly applying them to increased Leq caused by increased numbers of flights (not increased loudness of each one); There was currently stacking at peak times. Aircraft came off the stack at low altitude and in prevailing wind conditions followed a fixed narrow band of paths that took them over Gestingthorpe, Wickham St Paul, Maplestead and Hedingham.

Residents were also disturbed by very noisy night flights. To achieve BAA's target, the runway would have to be used close to full capacity for most of the day, thus greatly increasing the amount of stacking, making the daytime noise disturbance increase by a far greater factor than the increase in the amount of traffic. In addition there would have to be many more flights in the disturbing

night and shoulder periods.

Intensification of use of the Airport would bring increased congestion to the local transport system. There was insufficient rail capacity into Liverpool Street, and the Underground service from Liverpool Street was poor, especially for journeys to Victoria, Westminster, Waterloo, London Bridge, Blackfriars and Euston. Currently congestion on the A120, at the A131(N) and B1018 junctions brought both north south and east west traffic to a standstill for several hours per day. There was also congestion at both ends of the M11. Unless BAA provided additional tracks between Stansted and Liverpool Street, improvements to the Circle Line and brought the A120 up to near motorway standard from Stansted to the A12, or provided a Stansted to Colchester Rail Link, intensification of use of the Airport would cause severe problems.

There is an insufficient local supply of the unskilled labour for the Airport's current needs. Expansion would require even more long distance commuting or more local housing and would also create more demand for water and other services. Mr Bolter felt the current residents of Essex should not have to bear the cost of the infrastructure to accommodate an influx of new workers.

8 Mr M Bennett – Braughing Parish Council

Mr Bennett opposed expansion because he thought it would be a never-ending process causing traffic increase without contributing to public funds by tax, and causing detriment to natural products. He felt the airport brought with it unfair practices and that the growth of it should stop now. He was concerned about the damaging effect it would have on the world his grandchildren would inherit. He thought a survey should be done of the long-term effects of the airport. There was no transport infrastructure, water or sewerage to support the plan applied for.

9 Councillor Swain – Henham Parish Council

Councillor Swain stressed the interests of the parish. Expansion would extensively conflict with the local plan. The road network was wholly unsuited to traffic from Stansted; there was a need for greater traffic regulation and the impact on rail travel would be bad. Cargo flights led to lorries in country lanes, warehousing and inappropriate development in rural areas, replacement of residential occupation by multiple-occupation, increase of pollution and planning creep especially of the industrial airport-related type. He asked for rigorous conditions to tighten the night flying tracks and times, and a condition that cargo traffic be not sent via Stansted. He asked for an enlarged safety zone, being concerned about aircraft coming in lower on long descents. He also asked for wider green barriers to the airport. He wondered whether mppa criteria were the best method of control and suggested that the Uttlesford District Council should investigate making a levy per passenger since the airport was in a monopoly position. He felt that the very broad definition of health made the Health Impact Assessment less useful and that the noise measurement of "annoyance" provided no satisfactory criterion.

Comments

Members noted that aside from noise measurements the only criteria were subjective judgements. Mr Harborough explained that there was a limit on numbers of cargo movements at Stansted whereas Gatwick did not have such a limit. It would be possible to look at a tonnage limit instead.

(At this point the meeting was adjourned for a ten minute break – 4.05-4.15pm)

10 Cllr Wendy Scattergood Cabinet Member for Planning and Rural Issues at Braintree District Council

Cllr Scattergood was concerned whether the infrastructure and facilities proposed would be adequate to serve the expanded airport and whether a limit on air transport movements alone with no limit on passenger numbers provided adequate control. There would be a greater impact on road, rail, bus and coach access than had been tested in the application. It was considered therefore that a limit on passenger numbers was still relevant and essential. As regards surface access BAA had offered improvements to existing services not new services. Previous comments made in response to the previous consultation particularly with regard to Witham and Halstead had not been addressed.

BAA should be asked to come forward with an improved package of bus and coach services with the medium term aim of establishing a comprehensive bus/coach network linking the whole of Braintree District to the airport. No consideration had been given to a rail link to the east of the airport; consideration must be given to the need for an integrated rail link.

As regards noise the north of the district was a predominately rural area and the increase in aircraft movement was likely to lead to a creeping background level detrimental to the amenity of the neighbourhood. She suggested that BAA be asked to pursue the use of quieter aircraft, continuous descent approaches and the location of aircraft stacks away from populations to limit the impact of aircraft noise on the district. She also recommended that any increase in night flights was restricted and that the assessment of the transport network included its noise impact, but thought air quality effects for the district caused by an increase in the numbers of passengers, were not significant.

In conclusion:-

- a) Braintree District Council objected to the application by BAA to remove the condition that limits the throughput of passengers at the airport.
- b) Any permission granted should be subject to a package of public transport improvements to include a comprehensive bus/coach network linking the whole of Braintree District to the airport and consideration of the need for a rail link

- c) BAA should be required to pursue the use of quieter aircraft, continuous descent approaches and location of aircraft stacks away from populations to limit the impact of aircraft noise on the District. Any increase in night flights should be restricted and the assessment of the transport network should incorporate noise impact.
- d) BAA should be required to assess the transport network for, the best environmental option towards sustainable growth, promoting incentives for use of public and shared transport to mitigate effects of more road use.

Questions

In answer to a Question Councillor Scattergood said that 25mppa was barely acceptable; 35mppa was totally unacceptable.

11 Councillor D Cornell Castle Ward, Saffron Walden Town Council

Councillor Cornell explained that she was speaking as a representative of Castle Ward rather than of the Saffron Walden Town Council. The question, she felt was whether the lives of residents across the whole of Uttlesford had changed significantly since the last Airport application. The impact to Saffron Walden had not been very noticeable but it was important that the quality of life was maintained for the residents in the whole District.

Comments

Members noted that the decision in the case of the last application had not been unanimous.

12 Tom Foster, Kelvedon Ward of Braintree District Council.

Tom Foster considered that the passenger and flight limits on the airports activities were wisely set and to set the limits aside at the request of BAA would be unsustainable for the environment and objectionable for the people living near the airport. The frivolous uses to which cheap flights were put added insult to injury. Climate change was the most important of all the reasons for refusing the application. Government guidance linked local plans to sustainable development and require development plans to address the causes and potential causes of climate change. If this did not mean reduction of car and air travel the Government's concept of sustainable development was a mockery.

Further Government advice on combating climate change (The Planning Response to Climate Change. Advice on Better Practice) advised that "there is a real urgency to put in place regional and local planning policies on adaptation to climate change, and to strengthen policies that will mitigate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions", consistently with the Kyoto Protocol signed by the Government. But the Government contradicted this advice by its document "The future of air travel" which actually encouraged expansion of air travel. Use of emissions incentive trading to "control" emissions was

offered by the Government as an unconvincing reason for encouraging emission production by air travel, but emissions were rising not falling. While global warming was accelerating the lack of action was adding to the problem.

Mr Foster hoped the Development Control Committee would refuse the BAA's application.

(Councillors S C Jones and M Miller left the meeting at 4.38 pm.)

13 Councillor D Willoughby – Great Easton Parish Council

Councillor Willoughby explained that Great Easton lay directly under one of the Stansted flight paths and already suffered very seriously from aircraft noise, and this was the main thrust of their opposition to this application to expand the airport any further. The total removal of MPPA1 and raising the ATM to 264,000 opened up the possibility of up to 45 or even 50 million ppa with the new, larger aircraft already coming on-stream. This was an attempt to be able to expand Stansted into the largest single runway airport in the world; it was not reversible; it would have a devastating impact on the district and the area for miles around.

The Parish lay under the flight path of Runway 05 so they heard ground noise from planes taking off to the south west (Runway 23), and aircraft noise from all planes taking off to the north east on two of the three routes. The Clacton-Sierra route planes produced audible noise that permitted but intruded on conversation, for about 30 seconds; and the Dover-Sierra route planes flew overhead, producing noise which drowned the noise of a passing high performance car with radio on full volume. Conversation was impossible for about 45 seconds.

Any increase in the number of flights would have a corresponding increase in the noise disruption.

A move to 35 mppa would require slots to be filled at a rate of 48 per hour, from 6.00 in the morning to 10.00 at night, with only a slight reduction from 10.00 to 11.00. This means that the noise level experienced now, for a large part of three days a week, would be sustained throughout the day -and possibly into the night, if current caps on night flights were to be lifted. Expansion of Stansted would be "an environmental catastrophe", when problems of loss of amenity, heritage and rural environment were taken into account, quite apart from the undesirable contribution to carbon emissions and air quality. Councillor Willoughby stressed that there was no description of the extent, the location or the cost of transport, commercial and industrial infrastructure that would accompany any further growth, and he urged the committee and the Council:

- a) To stop any further expansion at Stansted
- b) To prevent any further erosion of the environment and to reject the application.

(No questions)

14 Roger Clark – Vice Chairman of Broxted Parish Council.

Mr Clark explained that the village lay immediately northeast of the airport and underneath the flight path. Broxted was over flown by every flight arriving at or leaving the airport, with Great Hallingbury must be the most affected parishes in the area.

Although only a small council Broxted had done what they could to highlight just how awful matters already were, and how much worse they could get, yet it seemed that nobody was listening. Their views on night flights, the draft interim master plan and the need for, and siting of a second runway all seemed to have been ignored.

At 6.00am the noise normally started. Airplane after airplane, at about 60 second intervals over flying the village. The noise from one hardly faded away before the next one was overhead. It was almost impossible to listen to the radio! This went on and on including Sundays. At the height of summer residents could not make plans for a barbecue in the garden. To think that it could get even worse! BAA would say that they have offered double glazing, but who wanted to be indoors with all the windows closed in July in the countryside?

It had to be stopped. The Parish looked to the District Council to do what must be done, fully aware that this might lead to appeals and continuing uncertainty; that it might lead to more expense, and perhaps increased Council tax bills. The District Council had the backing and support of the Parish. Mr Clark stressed "Please don't let us down."

15 Councillor Bernard Engel – Hertfordshire District Council, East Herts DC and STACC

Councillor Engel stressed the importance of a proper infrastructure and of stipulating that the passenger number limit should not be exceeded. In answer to a question he said that he was not against the use of the runway but wanted adequate road and rail links. He added that no public consultation of local residents had taken place but that the Council had taken the decision that it would not object, being just a consultee. He added that there had been continuous representations about noise, especially landing over Ware, and constant complaints about routes. Each one had been considered and brought to the attention of Uttlesford.

16 R Jones – Hatfield Heath

Mr Jones said that he lived directly under the Dover and Clacton Sierra routes and plane noise adversely affected School and domestic life. He thought the LEQ measurements were inadequate and that the spot level noise impact was most important. There were also problems of traffic congestion, rat runs and illegal car parks and taxi services. He felt there had been no independent measurements of the key metrics. He asked that neither the Uttlesford planning officers nor any other presenter any negotiations which might imply

that the BAA application was acceptable.

17 Mr P Gerrard – Ashdon Parish Council

Mr Gerrard said that Ashdon had made its objection on 17 May on the grounds that there was unacceptable noise and air pollution to those living under the flight path. Cargo planes were a nuisance at night and the pollution from them had long term adverse effects. He asked the District Council to reject the BAA application.

He added that the intrusion into privacy amounted to a contravention of the human right to “undisturbed family life” under the Human Rights Act and he suggested the Planning Department should take this into account and reject the application.

Following questions by Members about the Human Rights aspect, John Mitchell agreed to examine this aspect.

Councillor Freeman confirmed that the Saffron Walden Town Council would forward their views following a special meeting to be held to discuss the application.

The meeting ended at 5.30pm.