

**STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES  
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on 25 MARCH 2008**

Present:- Councillor K R Artus – Chairman.  
Councillors C A Cant, J F Cheetham, A Dean, E Godwin,  
D M Jones, R M Lemon, and P A Wilcock.

Also present:- Councillors R H Chamberlain and A J Ketteridge.

Officers  
in attendance:- W Cockerell (Principal Environmental Health Officer), R  
Harborough (Head of Planning and Housing Strategy), J  
Mitchell (Interim Chief Executive) and R Procter  
(Committee Officer).

Guests  
in attendance:- NATS representatives L Boulton, C Grant and K Wood;  
and Green Issues representative P Heath.

SAP27

**PRESENTATION OF NATS PROPOSED CHANGES TO AIRSPACE**

Representatives of the National Air Traffic Service and Green Issues Communications gave the Panel a presentation as part of the current consultation, due to close on 22 May 2008. Mr Lee Boulton gave an overview of the reasons for holding the consultation. Key stakeholders such as County Councils and District Councils were being approached, and the proposals had been publicised in the media. He said this area was one of the busiest and most complex airspaces in the world. The proposed changes were necessary to ensure safety whilst reflecting annual growth of 4% in demand. The proposals had been developed over four years, and whilst they could be “tweaked”, it would be difficult to alter substantial elements, due to many technical factors. Where possible the proposals aimed to reduce both emissions and noise pollution, and to avoid overflying sizeable populations at less than 4000ft. Mr Boulton accepted that some people would be adversely affected by the proposals, but said that they aimed to strike a balance between fuel efficiency, flight delays, and noise, without compromising safety. In conclusion, he said that whilst only one option was put forward for consultation, feedback would be considered, and he therefore invited the Panel to express their views.

The Chairman thanked Mr Boulton for what he said had been an informative presentation. The Panel then put to the NATS representatives the following questions and areas of concern:-

- The proposal would increase noise disturbance to rural communities, where there was less ambient noise than in urban areas.
- Disappointment was expressed that consultation options had not been made available to the public.

*Answer: The design of Precision Area Navigation (P-RNAV) routes was complex, and serious consideration would be given to comments made. Minimising flights over populations, in accordance with CAP 725, meant an increase in the number of flights over less densely populated areas. Differences in terrain were taken into account.*

- How long do aircraft take to reach 4000 feet?

*A: 4 minutes.*

- Had Lden contours been taken into account? (Lden is the 24-hr Leq calculated for an annual period, but with a 5 dB weighting for evening and a 10 dB weighting for night. Directive 2002/49/EC requires EU Member States to produce noise maps in 2007 using the Lden noise metric.)

*A: No, CAP 725 required a Leq contour mapping exercise, which had been undertaken. Traffic growth had been modelled. It was noted that changes in fleet mix could alter the forecast Leqs.*

Panel's response: How would the ANASE report affect this consultation, or the future adjustments if "tweaking" takes place?

*A: Disregarding CAP 725 would invalidate the consultation. Unfortunately as the ANASE study was delayed it was not possible to take this into account.*

- What was the determination process for fuel efficiency criteria for aircraft routes? What would be the impact if in future more weight were to be attached to fuel efficiency?

*A: In the past the focus had been on minimising noise, but the need to address emissions had moved higher up the agenda. If the focus moved significantly towards fuel efficiency there would be a need to re-consider the proposals.*

- What was the lifespan of the proposal if implemented?

*A: 2015 but the proposals were expected to last beyond then, subject to minor adjustment.*

- If Stansted were to expand to Generation 2, would the proposed routes change?

*A: Routes to the West were "Gen 2 proof" as this proposal was necessary in any event, but in general it was considered that the proposal would support that development in theory.*

- The previously issued version of BAA's Property Pack would have been relied upon by people moving into what they hoped would be areas of rural tranquillity, but which would now be adversely affected by aircraft noise.

- There was an absence of options on which people could comment, and therefore how could the consultation be regarded as constructive?

*A: The proposals took into account matters such as the County Council's request to avoid Saffron Walden, with routes therefore going further north. NATS would welcome any suggestions for improving this proposal. Ultimately, if people were not content with the consultation they could make comments to the CAA.*

- The Panel expressed astonishment that the lifespan of the proposal was only to 2015; and that it did not take into account the second runway or even full use of the existing runway. The Panel questioned what account had been taken of ATMs at Stansted, and asked what was the maximum capacity this system could contain, and what was the maximum number of ATMs this region could contain?

*A: Overall there was a potential increase of 30% in ATMs in the region, although this point was subject to being checked. Figures for the area around Stansted would depend on sector arrangements: on the basis that a sector could handle about 50 planes an hour, the aim would be to increase to 60/65 planes an hour.*

- If a second runway went ahead would a new airspace management consultation be needed?

*A: Yes.*

- Surely planning permission could not be granted for a second runway if the routes the planes will fly were not known?

*A: The consultation for GEN 2 would include a design and NATS would then update the proposals.*

- Concern was expressed at existing levels of air traffic in what was the busiest and most complex airspace in the world, and Members questioned how much more the area could take.

*A: The development improved the separation of routes and provided extra capacity by reducing workload on each controller.*

- It was noted that cargo planes were very noisy – if they had to make a tighter turn, how much extra noise would there be?

*A: We believe we have gone as far as we can to indicate the noise of aircraft.*

- Why did the proposals suggest early convergence for certain approaches but did not do so for others?

*A: this was effectively a judgment call.*

- Could air traffic from Stansted be directed above air traffic from Heathrow?

*A: There was not enough space for such an option, as Luton was so close to Stansted.*

- What influence did NATS have on the level of intensity at which this airspace could be used, from the point of view of safety?

- *A: The requirements placed on NATS were to design a structure to meet a reasonable growth in demand. NATS had very little influence on the amount of operations at airports, or which routes were made available. This was a matter for determination at Chief Executive level, and such a question could certainly be raised as part of the consultation response.*

- Did the proposal come about as a result of the Government's White Paper?

*A: No, although the proposal was influenced by guidance from the regulator reflecting the intention that the airports at Heathrow, Stansted and Luton were to be used to their full capacity. There were various factors, including facilitating use of P-RNAV.*

- Concern was expressed over the height at which easterly arrivals would pass over Saffron Walden.

*A: This was currently 6000ft; but under the proposals it would be at 7 – 8000ft due to the introduction of a hold further north.*

Response: Noise at 7 – 8000ft did affect people, particularly in a rural setting.

- *A: Careful consideration had been given to the balance between tranquillity and intrusion, but unfortunately this was a subjective issue and little research was available. NATS had looked at a CPRE study into tranquillity mapping.*

- Concern was expressed at increased noise levels affecting more people, as noise at 7000ft and 8000ft would make a difference to those living in a rural area. The Panel noted that the proposals set out noise contours for 57 Leq. However, the onset of annoyance could occur at 54 Leq in some analyses.

*A: The guidance issued to NATS did not accept Leq 54 as such an indicator.*

- In view of the apparent aim to have more planes flying, and to have them arrive and depart more quickly, concern was expressed that a future major computer failure would have implications for safe landing of such an increased number of flights.

- As small adjustments could make a significant difference to a community, the question was asked whether NATS could provide representatives to discuss issues affecting particular parishes or wards.

*A: The consultation involved 12 million people potentially affected by the proposals, and it was therefore not feasible to attend community meetings. However, if feedback resulted in potential changes to design, it might be considered by the CAA to be necessary to consult with a particular village.*

*However, in general, meetings with representatives such as County and District Councils were the preferred forum. Without offering a guarantee, it was likely that collective feedback from such groups would be taken on board. Questions from parishes should be collected and then passed to Phil Heath of Green Issues, and it would then be possible to provide more direct responses to parishes.*

- Concern was expressed that P-RNAV's might not be adhered to, depending on the speed and type of plane.  
*A: There should be improvements on adherence to preferred routes, and with tight turns pilots would be expected to follow the route closely. Weigh points would be built in.*

SAP28

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bellingham-Smith.

Councillor J F Cheetham declared a personal interest as a member of SSE and NWEHHPA, the National Trust and Hatfield Forest Management Committee.

Councillor A Dean declared a personal interest as a member of SSE and the National Trust.

Councillor E Godwin declared a personal interest as a member of SSE.

Councillor D M Jones declared a personal interest as a member of the National Trust.

Councillor A J Ketteridge declared a personal interest as a member of Saffron Walden Town Council.

Councillor R M Lemon declared a personal interest as a member of the National Trust and Hatfield Heath Parish Council.

Councillor L A Wells declared a personal interest as a member of SSE.

Councillor P A Wilcock declared a personal interest as a member of CPRE and SSE.

SAP29

## **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2007 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **(i) Minute SAP19 (iii) – G2 inquiry**

Members expressed frustration at a perceived lack of action on banners for the recycling fleet and for a display in the reception area making the Council's opposition to a new runway at Stansted clear. The Head of Planning and Housing Strategy said that he understood that the question of resources for such actions had been raised at the recent meeting of the Finance and

Administration Committee, and that the expenditure was not to be incurred in this financial year.

There was discussion of the possibility of using the logo of the “CO2” campaign by Essex County Council. The Head of Planning and Housing Strategy said that designs were being prepared in-house, but these were not appropriate in their present form. He said that no resources now existed for officers to prepare exhibition displays. He also referred to the joint arrangements with other authorities, which necessitated a unified approach to publicity.

Exchanges then took place regarding the availability of draft designs, and the possibility of displaying a poster in reception. Councillor Ketteridge said that he would approach the Head of Community Engagement. The Chairman said that he would liaise with him on this point.

SAP30

### **NATS’ PROPOSED CHANGES TO AIRSPACE: TERMINAL CONTROL NORTH**

The Chairman invited the Panel to forward their comments to the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy, and asked the Committee Officer to forward to him a bullet points summary of Members’ questions to NATS. He asked the Principal Environmental Health Officer to provide information to Members on noise surveys he had undertaken for schools located under flight paths.

Councillor Chamberlain was concerned that Parish Councils should have an opportunity to discuss with officers the issues affecting their community. The Interim Chief Executive said that the Council’s draft reports would be available to the public, but that the unprecedented workload on the planning service meant that staff resources were not available for such meetings. The Chairman said that a list of Members’ comments arising from this meeting could be circulated to Parish and Town Councils.

Councillor Wilcock said he had sympathy with the point made by Councillor Chamberlain. He said that there were “winners and losers” under the proposals, and that as a District Council there was a need to find a balanced approach.

#### **ACTION:**

1. Comments and questions arising from the NATS presentation at this meeting to be collated and circulated to STAAP members for further comment
2. Members to forward supplementary comments on the NATS proposals to the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy.
3. A recommendation be made to Council to respond to the NATS proposals taking into account comments made at the meeting and further comments received.
4. Members’ comments and questions to be circulated to Town and Parish Councils.

SAP31

## **PROPOSED JOINT G2 PANEL**

The Panel considered the report of the Head of Planning and Housing Strategy on proposed joint working arrangements to resource the G2 application Planning Inquiry. The Joint G2 Panel would seek to identify the areas for consensus on behalf of the four authorities. The arrangements reflected discussions held with the other authorities. Councillor Ketteridge gave a brief report on the discussions held, and said that Uttlesford was fortunate to have the two county councils playing a leading role. Regarding the CO2 Group which had now been established, Councillor Cheetham said that the principle of tri-partite representation had been agreed.

Further discussion took place regarding the nature of the CO2 Group. The Group was part of a PR campaign set up by Essex County Council, and was a lobbying mechanism, rather than a commissioning body. The objectives of such a group were distinct from those of the Council as planning authority, and it was important to keep the roles separate. Councillor Cheetham asked for an agenda item for the meeting of the four authorities next week regarding the interface between CO2 and the Joint G2 Panel. Clarification was sought on funding of the CO2 Group. The Head of Planning and Housing Strategy said that such costs were met by Essex County Council from its central reserves, and that a joint budget had not been established.

The Panel **RECOMMENDED**

that Representatives to the Joint G2 Panel be the Leader or Deputy Leader, and Leaders of the other party groups.

SAP32

## **G1 INQUIRY EXPENDITURE**

The Panel considered the report on the resource implications of the G1 inquiry and the likelihood of contributions from other authorities. In reply to a question from the Chairman, the Interim Chief Executive said that Uttlesford had rebutted BAA's claim for costs, and that the Secretary of State was now considering the parties' submissions.

**ACTION:** Officers to provide a copy of the BAA response to the rebuttal to the Chairman.

In reply to questions regarding acknowledgements recently made by BAA in respect of air quality, officers said that there had been correspondence between the parties on this issue, and that the cut-off date was 11 April, after which there would be a final period for further exchanges of correspondence following which the matter would go before the Secretary of State. Whilst further technical work had been commissioned, which would be reported to Council, it was anticipated that this would reinforce the Council's arguments on these matters as expressed during the Inquiry.

SAP33

## **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Regarding the G2 application, Councillor Cheetham asked about the time span for parishes to respond. Officers replied that whilst the statutory period allowed for consultation with parish councils was 14 days, a date of 26 June

2008 had been set. This was the same deadline as the Highways consultation on the M11 and A120 junctions. Four planning applications had been received, and a further 40 applications were expected next week. There was discussion of a proposal to hold a special public meeting of the Development Control Committee. Officers reported that BAA had offered to give a presentation of its proposals to Panel and other Members of the Council.

The Chairman said that he would submit to Panel Members notes from his recent attendance at a meeting of STAAC, as that information would be helpful to Members. He asked that this information be circulated with the minutes.

**ACTION:** 1 Officers to arrange an extraordinary meeting of the Development Control Committee, to provide an opportunity for Parish Council representatives and members of the public to hear BAA representatives give a presentation on G2 applications.

2 Officers to circulate with the minutes notes provided by the Chairman relating to his attendance at a recent meeting of STAAC.

The meeting ended at 10.30 pm.