

20 January 2014

Dear Councillor

**STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL**

A meeting of the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel will be held at the Council Offices, Saffron Walden on Tuesday 28 January 2014 at 7.00pm.

Yours faithfully

JOHN MITCHELL

Chief Executive

**A G E N D A**

1	Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.	
2	Minutes for the meeting held on 29 October 2013 (attached).	Page 2
3	Matters Arising	
4	DfT: Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, Stage 2 Consultation	Page 8
5	Oxford Economics: Economic Impact of Stansted Scenarios (October 2013)	Page 20
6	Short Term Surface Transport Measures Recommended by the Airports Commission	Page 28
7	Any Other Business	
8	Date of Next Meeting	

To: Councillors K Artus, **J Cheetham**, A Dean, D Jones, M Lemon, K Mackman, D Perry, J Rich and J Rose.

Lead Officer: Roger Harborough

Democratic Services Officer: Rebecca Dobson (01799 510433)

**STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES  
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.00pm on 29 OCTOBER  
2013**

Present: Councillors J Cheetham (Chairman), K Artus, D Jones and J Rose.

Officers in attendance:

R Dobson (Principal Democratic Services Officer), R Harborough (Director of Public Services), J Pine (Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer) and A Taylor (Assistant Director Planning and Building Control).

**SAP7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dean and Perry.

*Councillor Cheetham declared a non pecuniary interest as a member of NWEHPA.*

**SAP8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2013 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to amending the reference to the date of the next meeting which was agreed to be at the end of the October as subsequently arranged.

**SAP9 MATTERS ARISING**

**(i) Presentation by Andrew Harrison**

Councillor Artus asked Members about their impression of what had been said.

The Panel commented on statements made in other public forums by Manchester Airports Group which were inconsistent with what had been said in the presentation. Members felt the owners were finding Stansted Airport a very different type of airport from those which they had experience in managing, in terms of the high percentage of passengers who arrived and departed using public transport, which was not the case at Manchester.

Councillor Cheetham said she had recently encountered an instance of lack of clear communication for passengers using the train services from the Airport. She said this incident seemed to be indicative of inexperience on the part of MAG in running an airport accessed by train. By contrast, the coach services were very good.

Councillor Artus said he would be attending a meeting of STACC the next evening, and asked whether Mr Harrison had given information about the sale of houses owned by the Airport.

The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control said the houses would not be sold until 2016 pending the Government decision on the Airports Commission report, which would be after the General Election.

**(ii) Minute SAP3 – National Air Traffic Services LAMPS workshop**

Councillor Cheetham asked for an update on the London Airspace Management Project. The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said the current Phase 1 consultation concerned changes to flight paths in and out of Gatwick, Biggin Hill, London City and Southend Airports, including the use of Point Merges instead of holds. The current changes did not affect Stansted. NATS had stated that it would look at changing Dover departures from Stansted to Clacton, but there was now no reference to that, possibly because the Phase 1 changes only affected flights between 4,000 and 7,000 feet.

Councillor Artus said he had attended a meeting of the Noise and Track Keeping Working Group last week, and this issue was very much on the backburner.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said the deadline for responses to the LAMPS consultation was 21 January 2014, and he would circulate a note to the Panel on any further updates.

**(iii) Minute SAP5 - Airports Commission**

Councillor Cheetham said she had attended the Local Government Association presentation given by Sir Howard Davies at which she had pressed him on the issue of blight. She said others had raised the issue of infrastructure.

SAP10

**AIRPORTS COMMISSION UPDATE AND RESPONSE TO SPEECH BY HOWARD DAVIES**

The Panel received a report on the Airports Commission and on a speech given by the Chairman of the Commission, Sir Howard Davies. The Panel was invited to add comments to the draft response to the speech, which had been entitled “Aviation capacity in the UK: emerging thinking”.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer drew attention to the terms of reference of the Airports Commission and reminded members the Commission’s interim report was to be published no later than the end of 2013. He described the long term options submitted to the Commission, which would be subject to shortlisting in the interim report, and

commented on a number of options relating to Stansted. He referred to a recent meeting at Stansted Airport between the Commission and a small group of members and officers from the Council.

Members noted the Commission's provisional indication via the Chairman's speech that additional net runway capacity in the SE would be needed in the coming decades. Sir Howard had given reasons why the Commission did not accept the four main arguments of those who thought new capacity was not required.

Regarding the Commission's counterargument to the assertion that regional airports could take up spare capacity, the Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer pointed out a possibility that data obtained from the Airport Operational Models Discussion Paper 04 might be unreliable in that the wording of the question could be misleading. He said the question asked respondents about their journey origin, but could have been misinterpreted by some who broke their journey overnight in London. The Panel agreed its response to Sir Howard's speech should include a request to exercise caution in relation to this CAA passenger data.

The Panel commented on the predicted population statistics, which would require further interrogation.

Regarding HS2, the Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said the Government had again downgraded the benefits to costs ratio by about 8%.

The Panel noted that the issue of blight would be included in the interim report and would need to be looked at by Government.

Councillor Artus asked how the final report would be presented.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said Sir Howard Davies would set out measures on how the UK could unlock the potential of existing airports, and would then shortlist several long term options to go forward for more detailed investigation. The interim report would likely rule out the least feasible options.

The Commission would set out a timetable for responding to the interim report, and the Commission had previously indicated that the development of Phase 2 long term options would include consultation by proposers with all interested stakeholders.

Councillor Artus said schemes which were omitted from the shortlist might challenge it.

The Panel discussed the position of other stakeholders such as Essex County Council, which seemed currently not to be definitely opposed to a second runway, and East Herts District Council. Councillor Cheetham said she and Councillor Ketteridge had written to the Leader of ECC to caution against revealing their stance at this stage. However ECC's

view was that if expansion were to go ahead then prior consideration should be given to infrastructure. East Herts District Council were said to be opposed to a second runway.

Members felt it would be helpful to convene a meeting of the Four Authorities Group in early January.

Councillor Artus said other stakeholders would be local business groups, which were normally supportive of expansion.

The Panel considered the draft response to the speech by Sir Howard Davies, expressing concern on the part of the Council at indications that some net additional runway capacity would be required in SE England in the coming decades.

Members agreed the draft response. Councillor Cheetham asked for a summary prepared for SASIG be circulated to the Panel, as it contained a helpful critique of the speech.

SAP11

## **PLANNING AND NOISE**

Councillor Artus said there was currently no practical procedure for taking noise into account in the planning process since the previous Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG24) was withdrawn. He asked members to consider how such a framework could be implemented and how it would be arbitrated. STACC had asked Government for its views on firming up the process from the planning perspective, but there was a need to agree planning measures.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said the District Council was proposing to roll forward the PPG24 guidance into an appendix in its new Local Plan in the absence of anything better. Also, when MAG produced a revised version of the Airport's noise action plan it ought to be possible to include some form of alternative noise metric (such as N70) that was easier to understand and explain than LAeq..

Councillor Artus asked whether this would be a case of applying a scale or combining this with ground measurements, and how limits would be enforced from a planning perspective.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said if there were to be a further planning application to expand the Airport, the Council at that point could seek to impose a noise envelope condition which would refer to the relevant N70. The process was reliant on publication of data by the Airport. In the new Aviation Policy Framework, the Government was recommending that LAeq should not be the only measure used when airports sought to explain how locations under flight paths were affected by aircraft noise. Airport operators were encouraged to use alternative measures which better reflected how aircraft noise was experienced in different localities. These measures should be developed in consultation with Consultative Committees and local communities. The content of

Stansted's next noise action plan could be included on the agenda for planning liaison meetings.

Councillor Artus said last time planning permission was granted in relation to the Airport, BAA itself had written the noise action plan, which had subsequently had to be revisited by the EIG. A stronger line should be taken with MAG. He said the issue should be considered through meetings between Uttlesford District Council, STACC and MAG.

Councillor Cheetham said the issue of a noise action plan should first be addressed in discussions between the local authority and MAG.

Councillor Artus said he could, via EIG, facilitate a group which would then have the backing of STACC.

Councillor Cheetham said she did not agree with this suggestion as it was for the local authority to talk directly with the Airport, and STACC was an organisation set up by the government, with comparatively weak terms of reference.

Councillor Artus said his concern was simply that a mechanism for addressing noise in the planning process be set up and that it was officially recognised. The expertise in this field rested with the same people but the issue would benefit from having a masthead.

Councillor Cheetham said the expertise in planning matters lay with Uttlesford District Council and that discussions had to start with Stansted.

SAP12

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **TRAINS**

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer referred to a recent study published by Nichols into strengthening the Stansted Express service. The study had been commissioned by London First. He said the aim was to speed up Stansted Express journeys by 7-8 minutes within the next control periods 2014-19 and 2019-24, and to improve incident recovery procedures. The study also considered platform utilisation at Liverpool Street after Crossrail opened, including diverting some WAML services to Liverpool Street via Stratford to reduce congestion on the approach to Liverpool Street.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said some of the research did not appear to be as strong as it might have been. There were some questions about how this tied in with the services strengthening proposals that were being promoted for Inner London, and it was not entirely clear what the implications were for stopping patterns on trains to and from Liverpool Street, Stansted Airport and Cambridge. The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer had asked for this matter to be an agenda item at the next West Anglia Routes Group (WARG) meeting.

He said the initial view of WARG was that a reduction in journey time of only 7-8 minutes for the cost did not seem to represent good value for money. What the study did do was add to the argument that long term investment in the West Anglia route was essential. However, if it were to be referred to by Sir Howard Davies, the Panel should be aware of the report in case there was a need for comment.

Councillor Cheetham said the proposals if implemented would cause inconvenience to non-Airport passengers on the line, and would contradict what had been stated by Chris Wiggan regarding the Airport's intention not to inconvenience local train passengers.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer agreed the proposals were not the solution the district was looking for.

The Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer said he would bring to the next meeting a summary of a report recently issued by Oxford Economics for the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium on the economic impact of Stansted scenarios..

## **STACC**

Councillor Artus asked if there were any items Members wished him to raise at STACC.

Councillor Cheetham said the "Meet the Buyers" event had been very good, but otherwise there was not much on the STACC agenda. Flights per annum had risen but not more than 100,000. Some new destinations had been introduced with much publicity, but it should also be noted that there were some closures of routes, such closures not being publicised.

Members commented on what type of airport MAG intended Stansted to become, whether a hub for the Middle East, or a hybrid, with a likely aim of securing routes to the US to benefit the Cambridgeshire economy.

SAP13

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed to hold the next meeting in the second week of January.

*Note: subsequently to the meeting the intention changed to hold the next meeting in the last week of January to enable officers to arrange the SASIG presentation in mid-January.*

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.

**Committee:** Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**4**

**Title:** DfT: Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, Stage 2 Consultation

**Author:** Jeremy Pine, Planning Policy / Development Management Liaison Officer (01799 510460)

Key decision: No

---

## SUMMARY

1. This report is about the DfT's Stage 2 consultation on the new night flying restrictions which are due to be introduced at Stansted when the current restrictions end in October 2014. The DfT's proposal is to roll forward the current restrictions for 3 years, but with some minor modifications.
2. The consultation asks 13 questions (one of which is not relevant to Stansted) and a further 3 questions about the accompanying impact assessment. All the questions are set out for the Panel's information at the end of the report, along with the officers' suggested replies. The Council's response has to be sent to the DfT by 31<sup>st</sup> January.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Panel notes the report and advises officers what additional points, or proposed changes, it wishes to be included in the response to the DfT.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4. There are no financial implications associated with this report and its recommendation.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

5. None.

## IMPACT

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	The DfT has embarked on a two-stage consultation to replace the existing night flying restrictions. The Stage 1 consultation looked at how the existing restrictions have operated and asked for views on the structure and content of the
----------------------------	--



	<p>new restrictions. The consultation also sought views on how to assess the costs and benefits of night flying in drawing up the new restrictions. The Panel received a report on the Stage 1 consultation on 11/4/13. The Council's response was sent on 19/4/13.</p> <p>This Stage 2 consultation sets out the Government's proposals for the new restrictions, taking into account the views it received in Stage 1 (which have been published as a Stage 2 consultation annexe), the recently published Aviation Policy Framework (APF) and the results of the Heathrow Operational Freedoms trial.</p> <p>An impact assessment has also been published, which contains detailed information on the evidence base that the DfT has used.</p>
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	None.
Health and Safety	In drawing up the new restrictions, the Government will need to balance any perceived economic benefits of night flights against the effect on human health, especially sleep disturbance.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None.
Sustainability	None.
Ward-specific impacts	The new restrictions will impact all parts of the district overflowed by aircraft at night.
Workforce/Workplace	Officer and Member time in preparing this response.

## THE PROPOSED NEW NIGHT FLYING RESTRICTIONS FOR STANSTED

- The Government is proposing to roll forward the existing restrictions for a further 3 years until October 2017. The main reason for this is because the Government considers that it would be sensible not to make any significant changes before the Airports Commission has completed its work and the Government has had time to consider the recommendations contained in its final report.

### Movement and quota limits

8. The rolled-forward movement limits for Stansted that will be allowed within the night quota period (23:30 – 06:00) are 5,000 in each of the winter periods from 2014/15 – 2016/17 and 7,000 in each of the summer periods from 2015 – 2017. Since the start of the current restrictions in 2006, the average use of the movements limit at Stansted has been 78%. In winter 2012/13, the total number of movements was 2,876 (57.5%) and in summer 2013 it was 6,003 (85.8%).
  
9. In the impact assessment, the DfT anticipates that a high growth scenario at Stansted would result in the summer movements limit being exceeded round about 2016. In that case the airport operator could exercise its right to carry-over a 10% overrun into the next winter season with a corresponding reduction in the winter allocation. As the DfT does not anticipate that winter movements would exceed 3,500 by 2016/17 (70%), a 10% reduction in the allocation as a result of a previous summer overrun is not likely to challenge the airport operator. The Government is not proposing to change the carry-over rules.
  
10. The DfT's central growth scenario for summer movements and both its high and central growth scenarios for winter movements would not result in the movement limits being exceeded.
  
11. The rolled-forward noise quota limits for Stansted that will be allowed within the night quota period are 3,310 in each of the winter periods from 2014/15 – 2016/17 and 4,650 in each of the summer periods from 2015 – 2017. Both quota limits were reduced annually from the inception of the current restrictions but were frozen from winter 2011/12 onwards. Since the start of the current restrictions in 2006, the average use of the noise quota limits at Stansted has been 71.6%. In winter 2012/13, the number of quota points used was 2,023 (61.1%) and in summer 2013 it was 3,513 (75.5%).
  
12. In the impact assessment, the DfT's high and central growth scenarios do not indicate that either the winter or summer quota limits would be exceeded, although the high growth scenario would be close to the limit by 2017. If the quota limit had continued to be reduced after 2012 however, it is likely that a high growth scenario would exceed the limit in summer 2017. In that theoretical case, the airport operator could again exercise its carry-over rights.

### Ban of noisiest aircraft (QC8/16)

13. At the moment, QC8/16 rated aircraft are not permitted to take off in the night period (23:00 – 07:00) except between 23:00 – 23:30 when:
  - scheduled take-off was prior to 23:00
  - the take-off was delayed for reasons beyond the control of the aircraft operator;and

- the airport operator has not given notice to the aircraft operator precluding take-off.

14. In 2011, there was one QC8 cargo departure at Stansted between 23:00 – 23:30, and in 2012 there was one QC8 passenger departure (a privately operated flight by a state owned aircraft). There were no QC16 departures at Stansted in either year. Unscheduled arrivals rated at QC8/16 are not currently prohibited during the night period, but an aircraft this noisy on arrival would most likely be a “Chapter 2” aircraft which was phased out in 2002.

15. The Government is proposing to extend the operational ban on QC8/16 aircraft to include 23:00 – 23:30. The costs to the aviation industry are described as negligible, but in support of the change the DfT says (paragraph 4.46):

*“The operational ban will, however, have the benefit of giving greater certainty that no such noise events may occur and so should prevent any awakenings caused by movements (albeit rare) of these noisier aircraft types”.*

Your officers’ view is that this extension to the operational ban would, of itself, be a minute benefit to residents affected by noise from Stansted Airport. It will not outweigh the uplift in night movements that rolling forward the existing regulations will support as airport throughput increases.

16. There currently is a scheduling ban on QC4 aircraft in the night quota period, and the Government is not proposing to change this.

#### Dispensations

17. Dispensations are movements that occur during the night quota period but which may be disregarded from the night restrictions. The Government considers that it needs to retain the power to issue dispensations in exceptional circumstances. It also considers that airports need to retain the power to issue dispensations in circumstances prescribed by the Government, such as long delays caused by disruption outside their control. At Stansted there have been 14 summer dispensations since 2007 and none in the winter.

18. The guidelines have been revised by the Government to give further examples of dispensations in exceptional circumstances such as closure of airspace due to volcanic ash, changes to airspace arrangements that may impact on flight schedules, and to allow for future trials such as might result from the work of the Airports Commission.

#### The health effects of night flights

19. The consultation includes a brief commentary on new or emerging evidence. It recaps the 2009 WHO guidelines that no adverse effects on sleep occur at exposures below 40dB Lnight. Above 55dB Lnight, the situation is considered “increasingly dangerous” for public health. It mentions the CAA’s review “Aircraft

Noise, Sleep Disturbance and Health Effects”, which was published in January alongside the Stage 1 consultation. The conclusions of the CAA review were that findings were not conclusive and were often contradictory, highlighting the practical difficulties in designing studies of this nature. It acknowledged that, based on existing evidence, it is possible that exposure to aircraft noise may be a risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

20. The consultation refers, amongst other studies, to the recently published research in the British Medical Journal by Imperial and Kings Colleges, London (Small Area Health Statistics Unit – SAHSU) comparing data on day and night-time aircraft noise with hospital admissions and mortality rates among a population of 3.6 million people living near Heathrow Airport. The risks were around 10 to 20% higher in areas with the highest level of aircraft noise compared to areas with least noise, raising the possibility that aircraft noise is a contributory factor to the incidence of strokes, heart disease and high blood pressure.

21. The DfT’s conclusions are (paragraph 2.27):

*“As the SAHSU results for night noise exposure are broadly consistent with the previously published work from the World Health Organisation, we do not consider that there is a need to change the balance which we currently propose to strike between the costs and benefits of the current night flying restrictions. There are still a number of uncertainties in the studies which would need to be explored further. The results of the studies will be fully evaluated, and alongside other existing evidence will be used to help inform our policy development in the future”.*

#### Environmental Objectives

22. As indicated in the Stage 1 consultation, the Stage 2 consultation sets out the proposed environmental objectives that the Government will set at the level of individual airports before adopting operating restrictions. The proposed objectives apply to all three airports.

23. The proposed objectives are set out in the table below. The rationale for each is that set out by the DfT in the consultation document. Other current environmental objectives were related to the 2003 Air Transport White Paper and are no longer relevant as they do not reflect current Government policy.

<b>Environmental Objective</b>	<b>Rationale</b>	<b>How it will be measured</b>
1. Limit and where possible reduce the number of people significantly affected by aircraft noise at night.	Reflects the Government's overall policy on aviation noise set out in the APF.	Area and number of people within the 6.5 hour night quota period contours, and in particular the 55dB contour.
2. Reduce sleep disturbance resulting from use of the noisiest types of aircraft.	Similar to one of the existing noise abatement objectives. The operational ban extension proposed for QC8/16 aircraft will result in QC4 being the noisiest types in operation.	Number of movements of the noisiest types of aircraft (QC4 and above) during the night quota period.
3. Maintain a stable regulatory regime pending decisions on future airport capacity and, at Gatwick and Stansted in particular, to allow growth in movements up to existing night movement limits and within noise quotas.	To allow sustainable growth at Stansted back to pre-recession levels whilst ensuring that the average QC points per movement, assuming full use of the movement and noise quota, will be below that permitted under the current regime. This is consistent with the promotion of the development of airport capacity in harmony with the environment.	Movements and noise quota used in the night quota period
4. Encourage the use of quieter aircraft during the night quota period so as to maintain the historic reduction in noise emitted per aircraft movement during the night quota period.	Adapted from two of the current objectives. QC points per movement are a key indicator of historic trends and of the contribution of noise reduction at source.	Average QC points per movement.

### Other matters

24. The DfT notes the willingness of the aviation industry to explore steeper approaches up to 3.25 degrees. Given the possible resultant noise benefits, the DfT believes that it would be realistic to implement trials during the next regime to assess fully the operational implications and changes in noise. The Council supports such trials.
25. The Stage 1 consultation raised the possibility of a night-time runway preference scheme being introduced at Stansted. The Council was sceptical about the overall benefits of a scheme, and the DfT agrees that there is no conclusive data to

suggest that there would be any major benefit in operating a scheme.

26. The DfT has looked at the evidence that was provided during the Stage 1 consultation about implementing displaced landing thresholds. The Council supported this, subject to technical considerations, but the DfT considers that the costs are likely to outweigh the benefits. It was considered that there might be some small benefit to residents to the northeast of the runway, but the airport operator argued that there would be significant infrastructure costs as well as an increase in taxi time, fuel burn, ground noise and emissions.

## Risk Analysis

27.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
<p>That the new night flights restrictions implemented in 2014 have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of local residents.</p>	<p>2. There is some risk because the Government has to balance the economic case for night flights against the local environmental considerations.</p> <p>Whilst the Government is proposing to roll forward the existing movement and quota limits, Stansted currently operates well within both. However, the headway will be reduced as passenger (and cargo) throughput</p>	<p>2. Any increase in night flights would affect the quality of life of local residents.</p>	<p>The Council has the opportunity to respond to the DfT's Stage 2 consultation.</p>

	increases along with the number of air transport movements.		
--	---	--	--

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Summary of Questions (*Officers’ comments are included in italics under the relevant question*).

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT QUESTIONS

Q1: Do you agree with our preliminary view as to the new studies on health effects?

*The preliminary view is that there is no need to change the balance which the DfT proposes to strike between the costs and benefits of the current restrictions. The Council welcomes the conclusions of the SASHU study which reinforce those of the WHO that adverse effects on sleep become increasingly dangerous above 55 dB Lnight. The Council is concerned, however, that uncertainties about causality (especially at below 55 dB but above 40 dB) will always be used as a reason to do nothing further. An inherent problem with all health studies of this type is the transient nature of the surrounding resident population.*

Q2: Do you have any further views on the costs and benefits, including health impacts, which we should take into account in our decision?

No.

Q3: Do you agree with the proposed environmental objectives?

*E01: Yes as a short term aim, but the wording of the objective does have an inbuilt bias against those who are affected by night noise but who live in the countryside. Whilst the objective is perfectly measurable via the 55 dB contour, it could be argued that future expansion at Stansted (instead of, say, at Heathrow) would automatically meet the objective’s wording simply because fewer people live within the Stansted 55 dB Lnight contour than within the similar one for Heathrow. This objective reflects the noise efficiency metric proposed by the Airports Commission, to which this Council has objected. This objective is not therefore suitable in the longer term. The Council is pleased to note that the Airports Commission has not shortlisted a hub airport at Stansted for Phase 2 consideration citing, amongst other things, its lack of potential to address noise impacts compared to a Thames Estuary hub (Paragraph 6.50 of the Commission’s interim report).*

*E02: Yes, but the Council questions what the actual effect of this objective would be on*

*local residents. Table 9 of the Stage 1 consultation annex shows that even aircraft rated as QC2 account for only 5% of movements during the night quota period at Stansted. QC2 aircraft represent a similarly low percentage at Gatwick, but a much higher percentage at Heathrow (about 48%), mainly due to Boeing 747-400 arrivals. No doubt airlines would argue a strong business case for the continuation of QC2 movements at night at Heathrow, but the case seems less obvious at Stansted. As background noise levels are lower in the countryside, the DfT should include QC2 rated aircraft within the definition of “noisiest types of aircraft” at Stansted.*

*E03: Yes in so far as rolling forward the existing regime is a reasonable interim proposal pending the outcome of the Airports Commission. It is disappointing that the freeze in the noise quota limit that has been in place since 2012 will again be rolled forward until 2017, as this gives little incentive for airport operators to seek to improve the night noise climate.*

*E04: No. Whilst the aim is laudable and the objective is measurable via the average QC points per movement, it is unclear what is meant by “encourage”. Would there be any sanction if the average QC points per movement increased?*

Q4: Do you agree that the next regime should last until October 2017?

*Yes, in order to be able to meet the stated aim of taking into account the Airports Commission’s final report, which is due to be published in 2015. The Council remains of the view that it would be better in the longer term for regimes to become aligned with noise action plans produced by the airport operator.*

Q5: Do you have any views on the revised dispensations guidance?

*Dispensations do not seem to be a significant issue at Stansted, but the revised guidelines do seem fair.*

Q6: Do you agree that we should maintain the existing movement and noise quota limits until October 2017? If not, please set out your preferred options and reasons – this could include the noise and economic impact of any alternatives.

*No. It is disappointing that the proposed restrictions yet again roll forward the noise quota limits of 3,310 and 4,650 which have been in place since winter 2011/12 and summer 2012 respectively. As passenger and cargo throughput at Stansted Airport is expected to grow from now until 2017, the restrictions are unlikely to prove challenging to the airport operator as there is considerable unused headroom within the existing scheme, plus scope to use the 10% overrun arrangements should the need arise.*

*The impact assessment accompanying the consultation forecasts only a possible small exceedance of the summer movement limit at Stansted in 2017 under the high growth scenario. However there is no similar exceedance of the quota limit, which indicates to the Council that the summer quota limit is too generous. It is during the summer months that residents may wish to sleep with windows open. A simple extrapolation repeating the rate of quota limit reduction that took place from summer 2007 to 2012 would cause a summer exceedance in 2017, and would be more challenging for the airport operator.*



Q7: Do you have any comments on our forecasts to October 2017?

*Looking at Tables 1 to 10 in Annex B, the areas contained within the 3 dB stepped contours are remarkably consistent between the three airports in both the central and high growth scenarios. Stansted, of course, has a lower population and household density within each contour compared to Heathrow and Gatwick because of its countryside location. The Council's response to proposed Environmental Objective 1 is relevant here.*

Q8: Do you have any views on how the benefits of quieter aircraft can be shared in future between communities living close to the airport and the aviation industry?

*On this issue, paragraph 4.40 of the consultation suggests trading off quieter flights for increased capacity, or more predictable periods of respite with higher numbers of total flights. In the Council's view, the use of less noisy aircraft should not be rewarded by more night flights as this would seem to partly defeat the object. The Council has supported the provision of a respite period at Stansted between 02:00 – 06:00, but not at the expense of increased night flights during the rest of the night period.*

Q9(a): Do you agree with extending the operational ban of QC8/16 aircraft to the entire night period (23:00 – 07:00)?

*Yes, but in relation to night flights at Stansted Airport this represents only a minute benefit. It will not outweigh the uplift in night movements that rolling forward the existing regulations will support as the airport's throughput increases.*

Q9(b): Do you agree with our assessment of the costs and benefits in the draft IA?

*See answers to IA questions 2 and 3 below.*

Q10: Are there any other changes to the regime which we should consider?

*No.*

Q11: Do you have any further comments on the scope for trialling new operational procedures which have potential noise reduction benefits in the period up to 2017?

*The Council still considers that there is a good case for trialling a respite period at Stansted from 02:00 – 06:00, especially as the consultation says in paragraph 5.30 that Heathrow's voluntary agreement appears to be working well. Also, voluntary curfews are supported in the APF. As only 25% of Stansted's night movements are after 02:00, it is not clear why it would be impractical to trail one in the short term. Paragraph 5.30 of the consultation says that it is clear that there would be a number of costs and benefits which would have to be explored further in taking forward options in the future. The implication from this is that a trial would not be initiated until after 2017, pushing the prospect of a*

*finalised arrangement further into the medium or longer term. One of the best ways to evaluate these costs and benefits would be to initiate a trial. It is always easy to find reasons not to do things.*

*The Council agrees that it should be realistic to trial 3.25 degree descents during the next restrictions period.*

Q12: Are there any other matters you think this consultation should cover?

No.

Q13: *(Question specific to the operation of Heathrow)*

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1: Do you agree with our assessment of how movements and quota usage are likely to change over the period to the end of the summer season 2017 at Stansted?

*Winter movements at Stansted have been erratic during the night quota period since 2008/09, and this has been reflected in the usage of quota points. The impact assessment acknowledges that there is inherent uncertainty surrounding future growth in night movements at the airport. The Council agrees with this, and a large unknown will be the marketing success (or otherwise) of M.A.G in attracting new airlines to Stansted during the period to 2017. However, use of observed night movement growth rates prior to the economic downturn and DfT forecasts of atm growth up to 2020 would seem to be prudent.*

Q2: Do you agree with our assessment of the costs and benefits of option 1 at Stansted? Would you expect there to be any additional costs and benefits?

*(Note: Option 1 is rolling forward the existing restrictions)*

*Yes. The existing restrictions are being rolled forward in a situation where the movement and quota limits do not restrict the current number of night flights, and are unlikely to do so until 2017 using the DfT's forecasts in the impact assessment. No additional costs and benefits are anticipated.*

Q3: Do you agree with our assessment of the costs and benefits of option 2 at Stansted? Would you expect there to be any additional costs and benefits?

*(Note: Option 2 is rolling forward the existing restrictions plus extending the existing operational ban on QC8/16 aircraft to 23:00 – 23:30)*

*See answer to Question 9(a). The impact assessment says of the extension to the operational ban: "It will, however, have the benefit of certainty that no such noise events will occur and will prevent any awakenings caused by movements of these noisier aircraft"*

*types". The Council thinks this is an overestimation of the overall benefit to residents living around Stansted as recently there has been only one QC8 departure between 23:00 – 23:30 each year. Being awakened by an aircraft that is not as noisy as it could have been does not seem to the Council to be much of a benefit.*

**Committee:** Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**5**

**Title:** Oxford Economics: Economic Impact of Stansted Scenarios (October 2013)

**Author:** Jeremy Pine, Planning Policy /  
Development Management Liaison Officer  
(01799 510460)

Key decision: No

---

## **SUMMARY**

1. This report, which is for information, is about a report commissioned by the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium (LSCC), which is made up of local authorities and business interests within the corridor between London and Cambridge. The report was prepared by Oxford Economics ("the OE report"), and has been submitted to the Airports Commission. Subsequently, the Airports Commission published its interim report on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013. This report briefly comments on what the Commission has said in its interim report about expansion at Stansted.
2. The OE report looks at the economic impact of four expansion scenarios at Stansted Airport on the London Stansted Cambridge corridor. The four scenarios are:
  1. One runway serving 35million passengers per annum (mppa) from 2030
  2. One runway serving 45mppa from 2030
  3. Two runways serving 76mppa from 2030
  4. Five-runway hub airport serving 200mppa by 2050The OE report does not make any recommendation about the best option for Stansted, or the future of UK aviation policy in general.
3. Copies of the LSCC's covering letter to the Airports Commission and the accompanying summary are attached at the end of this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4. That the Panel notes the OE report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6. None

## **IMPACT**

7.

Communication/Consultation	The OE report included consultation with LSCC members as part of its preparation.
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	None.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None.
Sustainability	None.
Ward-specific impacts	The OE report concerns the economic impact on the London Stansted Cambridge corridor of various scales of expansion at Stansted Airport. It does not deal with localised economic impacts, and does not consider any other type of impact, such as environmental.
Workforce/Workplace	Officer time in preparing this response.

## THE OE REPORT'S FINDINGS

8. This report looks at each of the four scenarios in turn, and comments briefly on them. The OE report assesses the impact of airport expansion on the corridor using the following, which are referred to in the table at the end of the accompanying summary:

*Gross Value Added (GVA) – This is the difference between the cost of the physical inputs into the firm and the value for which the output is sold. The GVA is distributed as wages or profit. In the report, GVA is expressed net of displacement effects.*

*Direct benefits – These are enjoyed by the local economy and wider corridor. They include employment at the airport generating income, output and taxes.*

*Indirect (supply chain) benefits – Off-site companies supplying goods and services to the airport, airlines and companies operating at the airport. Again, these benefits are jobs, income, output and taxes.*

*Induced benefits – These result from those who are employed directly or indirectly spending their income in the wider economy. This injection of demand creates and sustains jobs across a number of sectors, such as retail.*

*Wider impacts – These include possible spin-off impacts such as attracting foreign*

*direct investment, increased tourism and benefits from a faster rail connection to London.*

#### Scenario 1: One runway serving 35mppa from 2030

9. This scenario represents the base case, i.e. no further expansion beyond the existing planning permission granted in 2008. Minimal change is anticipated in the composition of flights at Stansted, although there is some uncertainty over whether the new owners, Manchester Airports Group (M.A.G), will be able to attract long-haul carriers. 80% of the growth in passenger numbers anticipated by the DfT in the 2013 forecasts is to or from the UK and Europe, so there is plenty of extra traffic to fill Stansted's spare capacity. This scenario anticipates that the air transport movements (atm) cap of 264,000 imposed by Condition ATM1 of the 2008 planning permission is reached by 2030 and is maintained to 2040.
10. In this scenario there is a slow but steady increase in GVA and, as the study assumes that a new rail link is built in the next decade, a temporary boost in employment and GVA during the period of the construction activity. Periodic rail maintenance (every ten years) provides similar temporary boosts.
11. Freight tonnage on dedicated cargo planes is shown to grow steadily until it flatlines in 2020. In this scenario, bellyhold freight tonnage is assumed to be inconsequential because of the lack of long-haul.

#### Scenario 2: One runway serving 45mppa from 2030

12. This scenario presumes that a further planning permission is granted for an expansion of throughput up to maximum use (or thereabouts) of the existing runway. No major capital spending is anticipated in this scenario because M.A.G assumes that the extra throughput is achieved through increased loadings, including the use of larger aircraft for long-haul such as the Airbus A380. For this reason, there is no increase in the atm cap.
13. In this scenario the percentage of passengers flying to destinations outside the UK and Europe increases to 15% from a nominal 1% under Scenario 1. In coming up with this figure, assumptions have been made in the OE report about the split that would result between short-haul and long-haul services. The OE report admits that there are clear uncertainties about whether this pattern of flights is realistic, and there are a range of possible options for the split. On the one hand, long-haul flights might be reluctant to be drawn away from hub airports, on the other there could be a higher than anticipated demand for long-haul flights from the East of England.
14. GVA is slightly above Scenario 1, but is peaked in the same manner due to the construction of the new rail link and periodic rail maintenance.

15. As per Scenario 1, freight tonnage on dedicated cargo planes grows steadily until 2020, but there is a modest increase in bellyhold cargo from about 2025 – 2030 reflecting the extra capacity that would be provided in long-haul aircraft.

16. In Paragraph 6.58 of its interim report, the Airports Commission says:

*“The airport is, however, currently prevented from operating to its absolute maximum capacity due to planning restrictions and the Commission will consider in the next phase of its work whether there is a case for lifting these as part of its overall strategy for optimising aviation capacity in the London system”.*

The Commission has not given any further details at this stage about how this will be done, but has indicated that it will provide further details of its work programme during this year.

### Scenario 3: Two runways serving 76mppa from 2030

17. This scenario presumes that a further planning permission is granted for a second runway and associated facilities. In this instance, Stansted operates as a second hub with Heathrow, and because of this the OE report assumes less growth in the share of flights going to long haul destinations than in Scenario 2 (10 – 11% of total flights). Full capacity is estimated to be reached in 2025, with the runways operating in segregated mode. Major capital spending (an additional £2bn) would occur between 2015 and 2029. As a result there would be a significant increase in GVA up to 2029, after which values would level off to again be boosted by periodic rail maintenance. Employment generation under this scenario would share roughly the same profile as GVA.

18. OE assumes under this scenario that there would be a doubling of the atm limit, resulting in a doubling of the freight tonnage carried in dedicated cargo aircraft. There is a modest growth in bellyhold cargo compared to Scenario 2, reflecting the higher number of long haul flights in spite of the slightly lower overall percentage compared to Scenario 2.

19. In this scenario (as in Scenarios 1 and 2), OE have been advised by M.A.G that the existing night movement and quota limits would be sufficient.

20. The Commission has not shortlisted a second runway at Stansted for Phase 2 consideration, although it has said that it should be reconsidered *“as part of any future review of options for a second additional runway, which will be able to take into account the long term effects of competition resulting from its sale by BAA Ltd”* (Paragraph 6.59 of the interim report). In this quote, the reference is to a second additional runway in the London area which, in the Commission’s view, may be needed after 2040 / 2050.

21. Several reasons were given by the Commission for not shortlisting a second runway at Stansted. These include:

- Spare capacity until 2040, even with other London airports remaining constrained
- Smaller immediate catchment area than Heathrow or Gatwick
- Longer rail journey times to Central London than other options, and a new line is not included in current costings
- Would not be significantly cheaper than a second runway at Gatwick
- Would increase noise impacts in 2030 at the local level
- Would require the loss of a high number of listed buildings and the largest area of greenfield land of any of the main single runway options.

#### Scenario 4: Five-runway airport serving 200mppa by 2050

22. This is the option that was proposed by the Mayor of London and which was submitted to the Airports Commission. It assumes that the existing airport continues to grow to 35mppa (Scenario 1), with construction of a new hub airport starting in 2020 for opening in 2029 and becoming London's hub airport a year later. It is anticipated that the new hub would handle 135mppa in 2040, continuing to rise to 170mppa in 2050 with the existing airport continuing to operate at 35mppa.

23. Substantial capital investment is required (about £60bn), with a spike in GVA and employment occurring between 2020 and 2029, then a very sharp rise in both shortly after the new hub opens and a steady increase thereafter.

24. In this scenario, the share of passenger movements to the UK and Europe falls to just over 60%, prompting the LSCC to point out that this scenario offers the greatest improvement in connectivity between the corridor area and the rest of the world, and the greatest potential for catalytic economic impacts.

25. Reflecting the increased amount of long-haul (39% in 2040), there is a substantial increase in bellyhold cargo tonnage handled after 2029. Freight tonnage on dedicated cargo planes levels off in 2020 as per Scenarios 1 and 2 because the existing airport continues to operate. Again, it is presumed that the current night flying restrictions remain in place.

26. The Commission has not shortlisted the Stansted hub option for Phase 2 consideration for a number of reasons. These include:

- Very expensive compared to expanding an existing airport, not including any costs associated with closing Heathrow or compensating London City and Luton for any necessary reduction in their capacity
- Ten times as many people affected by aircraft noise compared to a Thames Estuary hub option
- Located in an affluent area of the country offering fewer regeneration opportunities and, although broadly aligned with the Lea Valley development corridor would not support London's economic development objectives to the same extent (as a



Thames Estuary hub)

- Impact on cultural heritage would be greater than for any other option considered, as well as requiring the loss of more than 2,000 hectares of high quality agricultural land and up to six villages
- Would require major new surface access infrastructure, which would present environmental and deliverability challenges, especially any new high speed line such as to St Pancras
- Would involve the closure of Heathrow and reduced capacity at London City and Luton, limiting the extent of additional capacity that can be provided.
- According to advice from NATS, the number of ATMs required to provide the extra capacity may be beyond the total number that can be accommodated at one site
- The assumption that the existing runway would remain as is and attract the low-cost market is untested
- The assessment of the economic and social impacts of the closure of Heathrow is uncertain, and the relocation of an airport like Heathrow is unprecedented

### Wider impacts

27. The OE report considers that the key to achieving any of the passenger throughput increases is a substantial upgrade to the airport rail link, namely reducing the journey time to Central London to 30 minutes. This results in journey-to-work time savings for existing commuters, plus increased wages for those who switch from locally based employment to posts in London due to easier commuting. However, as OE assume only an improvement to the airport rail link, these benefits would not accrue to those using other services.

28. Secondly, the OE report looks at how improved air connectivity can encourage additional investment in the area. The OE report concludes that the full scale of impacts would only be realised in Scenario 4 where there would be the fullest improvement in long haul connectivity. In Scenario 3, it is not clear that Stansted would be preferred to Heathrow. On locational issues, the OE report says:

*“High value added services particularly reliant on air connectivity would be drawn to either the immediate airport vicinity or the areas close to rail stations on the newly upgraded line. If the new rail link were a non-stop service though it might be difficult for towns between London and the airport itself to attract these firms.*

*The findings also suggest a concentric pattern of development around the airport, with hotels and other medium-value added services in the inner ring, and logistics firms further out. However, as we noted earlier, the only main road artery around the airport itself is the M11 – it may be that rather than locate around the airport, firms most reliant on quick access to the road network locate up and down the motorway”*

29. Finally, the OE report looks at the impact of airport expansion on overseas tourism in the East of England (EofE) region. Tourism to the EofE dipped to just below 2m with an associated spend of £800m, and it is estimated that this will grow to 6.5m visits by 2040 with an associated spend of £4bn.

30. It is notable that OE is unclear whether airport expansion will necessarily impact on the number of overseas visitors to the EofE. About 16m passengers from Europe arrive at Stansted each year, but there were only 1.5m tourists from the continent to the EofE and it is unclear how many of those arrived via Stansted. OE does consider that increasing passenger numbers on European flights from Stansted could be dominated by outbound UK tourists, but it is difficult to measure this. Although there are no current long-haul flights to / from Stansted, about 300,000 visitors from the USA and Asia visited the EofE in 2012. This demonstrates that long-haul visitors are not drawn by the availability of direct flights, but by the specifics of their visit.

## RISK ANALYSIS

31.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That further expansion at Stansted Airport takes place beyond 35mppa.	<p>2. The Airports Commission has not shortlisted either a second runway at Stansted or the development of a hub airport at Stansted for Phase 2 consideration, although it has indicated that a second runway could be considered as an option if a second additional runway in the London area is required post-2040.</p> <p>However, the Commission will be looking at whether there is a case for lifting the</p>	2.	The Council will need to express its view to the Commission about lifting the existing mppa and atm restrictions.

	existing mppa and atm restrictions at the airport.		
--	---	--	--

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

**Committee:** Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**6**

**Title:** Short Term Surface Transport Measures  
Recommended by the Airports Commission

**Author:** Jeremy Pine (Planning Policy /  
Development Management Liaison Officer)  
(01799 510460)

Key decision: **No**

---

## Summary

1. This report, which is for information, is about a letter written by the Chairman of the Airports Commission (Sir Howard Davies) to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The letter, dated 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013, predated the publication of the National Infrastructure Plan (NIP) 2013, the Autumn Statement and the Airport Commission's interim report.
2. The letter recommends a package of short term surface transport measures at a number of airports, including Stansted.
3. Copies of the letter and the accompanying annex containing the individual recommendations are attached at the end of this report.

## Recommendations

4. That the Panel notes the letter and, in particular, the measures that the Commission has recommended at Stansted.

## Financial Implications

5. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## Background Papers

6. None

## Impact

- 7.

Communication/Consultation	The Airports Commission has undertaken a series of consultations on its published discussion papers and guidance documents during 2013. It says that it has received many proposals regarding the railway line between Stansted and London.
----------------------------	---

Community Safety	None.
Equalities	None.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None.
Sustainability	None.
Ward-specific impacts	District-wide, but particularly those areas around the airport and within the West Anglia rail corridor.
Workforce/Workplace	Officer time in preparing this report.

### The Commission's Recommendations

8. The letter from Sir Howard is self-explanatory. These recommendations are in response to what the Commission considers is a strong case for attaching greater strategic priority to improving surface access to airports in the interim period before any significant new infrastructure can be brought on line. The recommendations are included in Paragraph 5.89 of the Commission's interim report.

9. Sir Howard says in his letter:

*"Our present recommendations on surface access make sense whatever the eventual choice of longer term option may be. We have not put forward any proposals which could only be justified in the circumstances of particular decisions on new airport capacity".*

10. There are four recommendations relevant to Stansted (Recommendations 6 to 9 in the annex to Sir Howard's letter). The Government has confirmed in the NIP that the recommendations will be taken forward. In response, Sir Howard has said:

*"I am pleased that the Government has acted on our recommendations to enhance surface access to some of our major airports. Improving the quality of surface transport links can play an important part in optimising how we use our existing infrastructure in the short and medium term. We will present further recommendations for making the best use of existing capacity in our interim report, which we will deliver later this month". (Note: Chapter 5 of the interim report deals with making best use of existing capacity).*

11. It is worth commenting briefly on each of the four recommendations.

#### Recommendation 6.

This recommendation gives a considerable boost to the case for major investment

in the West Anglia railway which the Council is campaigning for through its membership of both the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium and the West Anglia Routes Group. What is particularly welcome is the recognition that enhancements should benefit all rail users and not just users of the Stansted Express. In the NIP the Government refers to extending the scope of the East Anglian Mainline study to include access to Stansted. This could result in more resilient rail services to and from the airport in times of disruption. At the moment, it is the practice of the airport to run replacement coach services to and from Witham to connect with Mainline rail services.

Recommendation 7.

Liverpool Street is extremely congested at peak hours, with no spare capacity into or out of the station at those times. It would make sense to look at alternative destinations, such as Stratford, which is very convenient for Canary Wharf. There is currently no direct service from the airport to Stratford.

Recommendation 8.

Paperless ticketing on airport rail services would be welcome as an improvement to connectivity and passenger convenience.

Recommendation 9.

When planning permission was granted for expansion to 25mppa in 2003, BAA Stansted signed a Section 106 agreement which included obligations to improve the strategic road network and monitor traffic levels at both key strategic points and on the local road network. The obligations also included the proportionate funding of any required improvements. The unilateral undertakings submitted by BAA Stansted in 2008 with the Generation 1 permission (to 35mppa) supersede the earlier obligations, but there still are monitoring and funding requirements on the airport operator.

Further monitoring would be welcome due to the passage of time, because the economic downturn has meant that levels of road traffic to and from the airport since 2008 have not been as significant as was expected.

**Risk Analysis**

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the lead time for implementing the recommendations could be extensive, running behind the increased surface access demand from passenger	2	2	Maintain the political and stakeholder pressure for major rail infrastructure investment via the LSCC and WARG.  Ensure that the new Stansted Airport Surface Access

growth.			Strategy takes account of increased surface access demand over the next Strategy period.
---------	--	--	--

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



To: The Right Honourable George  
Osborne MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
HM Treasury  
Horse Guards Road  
London SW1A 2HQ

Sir Howard Davies  
Chair Airports Commission  
Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT

Web: [www.gov.uk/airports-commission](http://www.gov.uk/airports-commission)

Date: 26 November 2013

*Dear George*

The Airports Commission began its work in November 2012 and will produce its interim report by the end of this year. Our emerging conclusions are that the UK airports sector is experiencing worsening capacity constraints, which are already affecting performance at Heathrow Airport. These constraints are expected to become more widespread over the coming decades, particularly at airports in the South East of England.

In our interim report we will explore some operational changes which will allow the nation to make better use of existing airport capacity in the short term. We will also produce a shortlist of options for additional runway capacity in the longer term, which we will examine in more detail in the second phase of our work. All of those longer term options will inevitably take a substantial period of time to plan and build, even if political consensus in support of our recommendations can be secured. We therefore face a period, probably of a decade or more, before any significant new infrastructure can be brought on line to alleviate the capacity constraints facing the sector.

In the interim there is a strong case for attaching a greater strategic priority to transport investments which improve surface access to our airports. Surface transport improvements can encourage more use of airports which currently have spare capacity, improve the passenger experience, and make airports more attractive to airlines. Clearly, the needs of other users of the transport network must be considered, and we have taken them into account in reaching our recommendations, which in many cases would deliver substantial and wider positive impacts and benefits. However, for the foreseeable future, some greater weight should be placed on the needs of existing airports and their users when taking decisions on transport investment.



There are also environmental benefits to be gained through surface access investment. If we are to reconcile the twin objectives of meeting aviation capacity needs and remaining on course to meet the UK's environmental goals, we need to do more to support a shift towards the use of public transport, particularly rail. Of the airports serving London and the South East, only Stansted has broken significantly above the level of 40% of its passengers using public transport for their journey to or from the airport (largely on the basis of coach traffic). While the overall picture of London's modal split is comparable to many major European airports, it lags well behind the leading airports, such as Schiphol.

We recognise that some important surface access improvements are already planned for UK airports, for example at Heathrow a combination of Crossrail, Western Rail Access and M25 enhancements will provide significant additional capacity and journey time savings. The Northern Hub should provide Manchester Airport with the largest improvement in its surface access for a generation. The Birmingham Gateway development will improve the experience of many passengers travelling to and from Birmingham Airport. There are other, smaller projects, such as the planned platform enhancement at Gatwick Airport Station. We firmly support all these schemes.

However, there is room to go further. Even modest enhancements to road and rail links take some time to bring on stream. We are therefore writing to you ahead of the Autumn Statement, to encourage you to consider schemes specifically related to airport access in the context of your future spending plans. Where we are making recommendations, we have done as much as possible to develop them to a level that will allow for swift implementation. That said, we recognise that in some cases further work will need to be done on defining the nature of the scheme and assessing its costs and benefits by the relevant transport authority, be it Network Rail, the Highways Agency or the Department for Transport.

Our present recommendations on surface access make sense whatever the eventual choice of longer term option may be. We have not put forward any proposals which could only be justified in the circumstances of particular decisions on new airport capacity. We will return to those options as part of the second phase of our work.

Our recommendations are set out in detail in the annex to this letter. In particular, we are recommending a significant upgrade of the station at Gatwick Airport, beyond the works which are already planned, the cost of which could be in the region of £180m. We are also recommending urgent studies into increasing the capacity and improving the quality of the rail service between London and Stansted Airport, and to provide rail access into Heathrow from the south. We have not made specific recommendations on the various proposals that have been put to us in relation to smaller and regional airports, but we would emphasise that serious consideration should be given to airport users when determining priorities for local transport spending.



If the works we have recommended were to be delivered in full, that would amount to more than £2bn of investment. The proposals have different timescales for implementation, for some the work could start immediately while others require further development. Those options which we have identified where work could begin now are likely to cost in the region of £200m.

I know that you are aware of the need to make progress in strengthening our airport infrastructure. The economic importance of such development is high, and will become even greater as the economy recovers. While a final decision on new runway capacity will await a new government, a package of measures on the lines we recommend here could help to bridge the gap.

We therefore hope you will give serious consideration to these recommendations as you prepare your Autumn Statement.

*Yours ever*

*Howard*

Sir Howard Davies, Chair

RECEIVED  
MAY 10 1967

The enclosed report is being submitted to you for your information and for your review and comment. The report is being prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Directors and the Commission on the Status of Women. It is being prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Directors and the Commission on the Status of Women.

The report is being prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Directors and the Commission on the Status of Women. It is being prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Directors and the Commission on the Status of Women.

The report is being prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Directors and the Commission on the Status of Women. It is being prepared in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Directors and the Commission on the Status of Women.

Very truly yours,  
[Signature]

[Signature]

[Text]

## **Annex – Recommendations on short term surface transport measures**

### **Gatwick**

***Recommendation 1:*** *The Government should work with Network Rail and Gatwick Airport to implement a significant enhancement of the airport station, with an emphasis upon making the station more accessible to users with luggage (which should also enhance access for users with disabilities). The Government should pursue an ambitious (circa £180m) option for enhancing the station through the construction of a new concourse and ticket hall with enhanced access to platforms, subject to the airport providing an appropriate contribution to the costs of the scheme.*

***Recommendation 2:*** *There is a need to improve the suitability of the Gatwick Express rolling stock to make it more suitable for airport users, for example by the provision of additional luggage space. The Government should take opportunities to enhance it where they exist in the franchising system.*

***Recommendation 3:*** *The Government should work with train operators to promote the introduction of paperless ticketing facilities for journeys to and from Gatwick Airport station.*

***Recommendation 4:*** *The Government and Network Rail should accelerate work to produce a detailed plan for the enhancement of the Brighton Main Line, with a particular emphasis upon enhancing capacity and reliability, so as to accommodate growth in both airport and commuter traffic. This could focus on the alleviation of particular pinch points (such as East Croydon).*

***Recommendation 5:*** *The Government should work with the Highways Agency to develop a forward route strategy for the sections of the motorway network connecting to Gatwick Airport, with a particular emphasis on the connections between the M25, M23 and the airport itself. This strategy should consider options for expanding the slip-roads between the roads in question, which could become substantial congestion pinch points.*

Since the sale of Gatwick Airport, its new management has sought to increase the number of long haul destinations served by the airport and has already achieved some successes in this area. In light of the capacity constraints at Heathrow, we believe that the UK's interests, in the window until any new capacity can be brought online, lie in enabling passengers to more effectively access Gatwick's increasing connections to new markets, as well as its existing route network. This is reflected in our recommendations.

We have also recognised the other pressures that exist upon the surface access links serving Gatwick; particularly the Brighton Main Line. We understand that this limits the extent to which the airport's surface access might be improved in the short to medium term; London must remain open for business for residents and commuters, as well as for international travellers.

However, we believe that there are some works that can be done, particularly in terms of taking further the planned enhancements to the airport's station. The station is not, at present, well suited to the needs of airport users. Its

configuration is poor, particularly for passengers with luggage who are forced to wait for the rather inadequate lifts provided or else struggle with their bags on narrow escalators. This does not provide the best welcome to international visitors or send the message that the airport is well suited to long haul airlines and their customers.

In respect of the further enhancement of the airport station, we believe there is a strong case for taking forward a significant programme of improvements (costed at £180m in 2008), which would completely replace the existing concourse and ticket hall with a new facility. We believe that represents the best means of enhancing the passenger experience at Gatwick and hence the airport's ability to attract new long haul routes.

We have also reviewed a more modest scheme with costs below £50m, which would focus on improvements to the platforms and some modest refurbishment of the existing concourse and ticket hall. We do not believe that this would offer an attractive solution. However, since the airport itself would be a substantial beneficiary of the work, we recommend that the implementation of the more ambitious proposal should be subject to it making an appropriate contribution to the overall cost.

Ticketing facilities at the station are also poor and the range of tickets and fares available can be confusing. We have noted the London Assembly Transport Committee's proposal that Oyster facilities be provided at Gatwick Airport Station. We support this, but also note that paperless ticketing systems are rapidly evolving. We therefore recommend that Gatwick station be incorporated as soon as possible into the Oyster system or any successor.

The Gatwick Express service forms a key part of the airport's surface transport offering, but we are concerned that it faces a number of challenges in supporting the airport's connectivity growth. These challenges arise largely from a lack of capacity on the Brighton Main Line, but there are also clear reasons to suspect that the rolling stock's configuration is not ideal for an airport express service. We also need to recognise that while Gatwick Airport Station and the Gatwick Express are used by a number of commuters as well as airport users, the primary purpose of these facilities is to support the airport. We believe that the configuration of both the station and the rolling stock needs to reflect this.

In respect of the studies into future enhancement of the Brighton Main Line and the M25 and M23, my understanding is that Government, Highways Agency and Network Rail would, in any event, have needed to undertake this work before too long, due to the growing demands and pressures on the infrastructure. Our recommendations, therefore, should be seen as a call for the acceleration of this work and for due consideration to be given for the needs of airport users. I believe that the costs of the respective studies should not exceed £1m each.

**Stansted**

We received many proposals regarding the railway line between Stansted and London. The airport has announced plans to increase passenger numbers on the basis of ambitious deals with major low cost carriers, the long (and often unreliable) journey times on the Stansted Express remain a deterrent to full service carriers looking at the potential for using the airport.

There appear to be substantial strategic arguments in favour of enhancing this link. The line is used not only by airport passengers, but also by London commuters and Cambridge travellers. All of these pressures upon the line are set to grow, particularly in light of the London Mayor's Development Plan, which envisions substantial housing and business growth along the Lea Valley. The most commonly proposed solution to this problem is the 4-tracking of the line between Copper Mill Junction and Broxbourne Junction. The costs of this proposal are high but it is clear that the case for investing merits urgent consideration.

***Recommendation 6:*** The Government should work with Network Rail and Transport for London on a detailed study of the route between London and Stansted Airport and serious consideration should be given to 4-tracking the line as far as Broxbourne Junction, subject to a robust business case being developed. This study should consider how enhancements to the route might benefit airport traffic, London commuters and Cambridge traffic, recognising that any steps to enhance the Stansted Express service through regularising or reducing journey times and improving reliability will help the airport to play an enhanced role in supporting London and the UK's international connectivity. The study should take full account of the Mayor's London Growth Strategy.

***Recommendation 7:*** The Government, Network Rail and Train Operators should work together on options to connect Stansted Airport to a wider range of London destinations, with a particular emphasis on making better use of the connection facilities available at Stratford domestic station

***Recommendation 8:*** The Government should work with train operators to promote the introduction of paperless ticketing facilities for journeys to and from Stansted Airport station.

***Recommendation 9:*** The Government and the Highways Agency should monitor road congestion around Stansted Airport, with a view to making interventions should substantial congestion arise as traffic at the airport grows.

In respect of costs, I believe that both recommendations 6 and 7 could be accommodated within a single study with a budget of less than £1m. The cost of their eventual output, however, could be far higher. On the evidence available to us at present, I believe that the cost of the 4-tracking to Broxbourne Junction could be in the region of £800m. This is why it is vital that more work is done to establish the precise nature of the scheme, the business case it rests upon and how any new capacity generated might best be used to serve each of the markets that depends upon the line.



Recommendation 8 could be incorporated into the wider roll-out of paperless ticketing across the network which is already underway and need not have a substantial cost above and beyond this roll-out. As with the equivalent recommendation in respect of Gatwick, we have not specified the technology that should be used to deliver this recommendation.

## **Heathrow**

Heathrow airport is already operating close to its capacity limit and that its ability to open routes to new markets is constrained by that lack of spare capacity. In addition, there are works already in progress, notably Crossrail and Western Rail Access, which will bring huge improvements to the quality of Heathrow's surface access.

However, we remain concerned that the proportion of users (particularly workforce) accessing Heathrow using private cars remains high, with consequent implications for air quality around the airport. We therefore think that there is a case for plugging the remaining gaps in the airport's rail access, which are primarily to the south.

This problem has been recognised before and a proposed remedy was sought through the Airtrack scheme. This would have provided a rail link into the airport from Guildford, Reading and London Waterloo. However, the scheme was cancelled due to concerns over its cost (£673m) and its impact upon local transport networks, particularly level crossings in a number of towns along the route (some of which would only have been open for a few minutes in each hour). Since then, a separate proposal (Airtrack Lite) has been put forward which attempts to alleviate some of these issues.

We think there is a case to look again at rail access to Heathrow from the South. This may involve revisiting the Airtrack proposal or developing fresh ideas. Accordingly, in respect of Heathrow, we recommend:

***Recommendation 10: Recognising the importance of encouraging modal shift towards more environmentally sustainable forms of transport at Heathrow, not only for supporting future expansion plans but also for optimising the airport's operations within its current capacity constraints, the Government should work with Network Rail to undertake a detailed study to find the best option for enhancing rail access into Heathrow from the south. Initial indications are that up to roughly 15% of Heathrow's passengers in the London and South East region could benefit from improved Southern Access.***

Our understanding is that this study would require some time to do its work, although its budget would likely be less than £1m. Its eventual recommendations may have a cost of several £100ms, but a full study will bring a better understanding of the costs and benefits of the options in this area.

## **Manchester**

The Northern Hub will bring extremely significant improvements to the quality of Manchester's rail surface access, as well as to wider rail connectivity across the North West. By providing more opportunities for direct rail journeys through the centre of Manchester and providing additional platforms at Manchester Airport Station, this significant programme of improvements to the rail network in the North West will make public transport a more convenient and accessible option for reaching the airport, including for travellers from Leeds and Sheffield. We believe that with the Northern Hub, Manchester Airport should remain well placed to serve its customers for the foreseeable future.

We have, however, noted a number of submissions advising us of problems of road congestion around the airport. We acknowledge that, just as Heathrow airport is not by itself the chief cause of congestion on the M25, so too much of the congestion around Manchester airport is driven by commuter rather than airport traffic. However, we believe that the situation should be kept under review, so that swift action can be taken if congestion starts to have a real impact upon road users' ability to access the airport. We therefore recommend:

***Recommendation 11:*** *The Government should continue its support for the Northern Hub and ensure that the project is completed in full.*

***Recommendation 12:*** *The Government and the Highways Agency should monitor road congestion around Manchester Airport, with a view to making interventions should substantial congestion arise.*

### **Other Airports**

We received a significant number of submissions relating to surface access at other airports. In some cases, work is already underway on schemes that will improve their surface access; for example, the Birmingham Gateway project, which will renovate and refurbish Birmingham New Street station as well as its surroundings, will substantially improve the experience of passengers travelling to Birmingham Airport via Birmingham New Street.

In the case of Glasgow Airport, we noted the previous funding difficulties associated with the Glasgow Airport Rail Link and accept that the scheme is unlikely to be delivered in the short or medium term. However, we note that the airport remains relatively poorly served by public transport, considering its size and importance to the region.

In respect of many of the other proposals for enhanced surface access to regional airports, we must accept that the Airports Commission is not the body best placed to comment upon the costs and benefits of what are, in essence, local transport schemes. However, we are clear that whatever decisions we make about the provision of new airport capacity in the longer term, regional airports will continue to play an important role in serving their local markets. We would therefore urge local and national transport planning authorities to



give consideration to the needs of airport users in reaching decisions on local transport funding priorities.

Our recommendations in respect of other airports are:

***Recommendation 13:*** *The Government should continue its support for the Birmingham Gateway project and ensure that the scheme is fully delivered.*

***Recommendation 14:*** *The Government and the Highways Agency should develop a comprehensive strategy for motorway access to Luton, with a particular view to examining the case for enhancements to M1 Junction 10A.*

***Recommendation 15:*** *Recognising the past difficulties involved with the Glasgow Airport Rail Link, the Commission continues to believe that there is a need for improved public transport access to the airport. In the short term, the Commission recommends that the Scottish Executive develop enhanced bus links to the airport. However, looking beyond this, the Commission would recommend that the Scottish Executive work with Network Rail and other stakeholders to explore other options, including light rail options.*

***Recommendation 16:*** *The Commission is not the appropriate body to reach a view on many of the schemes proposed for improving access to smaller and regional airports. However, the Commission recognises the importance of allowing these airports to serve their local markets effectively and encourages central Government to work with local authorities and local enterprise partnerships to ensure that proper consideration is given to the needs of airport users when prioritising local transport investment.*