

J Fox – Statement 17 January 2020

Mr Chairman and planning committee members,

When I spoke at the EGM in June last year in response to STAL's less than satisfactory Section 106 offer, I concluded my contribution by expressing the hope that we would see the start of a new relationship between UDC and the community.

I deliberately didn't address the environmental imperative that, for the purposes of this public hearing can no longer conveniently be set aside and ignored.

The unanswered question remains as to whether there has been a material change of circumstances since the conditional approval of the application in November 2018; issues that may have tipped the balance of favour against this controversial application?

The answer hiding in plain sight is surely yes. From the government downward, it is now universally accepted that we are living in a climate emergency.

Climate Change Committee ('CCC'): The CCC published a landmark report on 2 May 2019 recommending that the UK should amend its legislation to commit to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This will require a major review of current Government policy on aviation carbon emissions and a coordinated approach to manage these nationally rather than allowing decisions about airport expansion to be taken by local planning authorities.

Notwithstanding these developments, MAG projects Stansted Airport carbon emissions of 2.50MtCO₂ in 2028 compared to the Department for Transport's (DfT) assumption of 1.37MtCO₂ for the same year. Thus, if the application is approved, Stansted Airport carbon emissions in 2028 would be 82% higher than assumed by the DfT.

The 43mppa planning application Environmental Statement volume 4.2 page 27 states that "the development case is unlikely to materially impact the UK's ability to meet its 2050 national aviation target of 37.5MtCO₂; ; an extraordinary statement; especially in the light that CCC has already stated that another runway at Heathrow would breach this threshold by 15%!

It is therefore hard, if not impossible to see how the environmental impact of the application can be reconciled with the CCC's May 2019 report and UDC's commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030!

Stansted's proposals would only increase aviation's carbon footprint further still and would do nothing to square the circle between aviation expansion and its increasing impact on the environment.

At the beginning of June 28th special meeting, I recall the chairman making a direct statement to the members of the planning committee about all actions having consequences whatever the outcome of future deliberations.

Stansted airport, like the wider aviation industry clearly thinks it can operate in a parallel universe where it isn't accountable for its actions and the subsequent environmental consequences that follow.

I urge you to do the right thing: make a statement in which the well being of the residents in Uttlesford and the protection of the environment is given priority over the commercial interests of Stansted airport!

We are told that humanity has only ten years to make a difference. You can make one straight away!

Reject this application!