

Dear Colleagues

I discussed with you yesterday a note I intended to send to all district councillors and town/parish councils in UDC area regarding the planning application at Stansted Airport.. Please see below the relevant paragraphs I have extracted from the total message. Please feel free to share with your members and town/parish councils as you see fit. The meeting on 26 March (at UDC council offices in London Road Saffron Walden) scheduled for town and parish councils is equally open to your town and parish councils.

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## **Current Position**

Before I outline the application received, I thought it would be helpful to outline what the airport currently has permission for, referred to as Generation 1 Permission. This is, of course, different to how the airport is currently operating but it is important to note that the new application has to be considered in light of (on top off, if you like) what is currently permitted.

In summary the airport is currently limited to 35mppa (passengers per annum) and an annual cap of 274,000 ATM (air traffic movements).

The granting of permission for the new arrivals hall in 2017 replaced the unimplemented terminal extension permitted in Generation 1.

Works at the fuel farm in March 2017 constituted lawful implementation of the Generation 1 permission.

Reports to Stansted Airport Advisory Panel (STAAP) (available on UDC's website) in February 2017 and March 2018 provide more details, including the monitoring status of the unilateral undertakings entered into as part of that permission. (You will note in these reports that the ATM referred to is 264,000; condition ATM2 on the permission also permits 10,000 general aviation flights, making a total of 274,000).

## **The Application**

The application is to increase the currently permitted passenger numbers at Stansted Airport from 35 mppa to 43 mppa. In order to facilitate this increase in passenger numbers within the existing runway capacity a new Rapid Exit Taxiway and new Rapid Access Taxiway are proposed to be constructed. In addition a the construction of nine new aircraft stands form part of the application.

The total number of air traffic movements will remain at 274,000 ATM, but as a unified total, which would allow a redistribution of flight types as markets and demands change. Currently the 274,000 ATM is made up of passenger flights, cargo flights and general aviation flights, which the planning application is seeking to unify to provide flexibility. This will not impact on the number of night flights which is strictly controlled by the 'Night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted 2017'. Chapter 7 of the environmental statement accompanying the application provides

further details and STAAP considered and Cabinet approved UDC's response to the consultation regarding this in February 2017.

The increased passenger limit would be achieved through the use of larger aircraft (including for long-haul flights), utilisation of the runway throughout the day (again including for long-haul flights that take off at different times in the day to short-haul European flights) and the use of the rapid access/exit taxiways.

The Case Work Office, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has confirmed that they have no comments to make and the council should determine the application in due course.

### **Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)**

The Council together with Essex County Council has entered into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Manchester Airport Group; the Council's general use of PPAs was approved by Cabinet in May 2017, following the best practice example of most other local authorities. The PPA is available on the Council's website.

A PPA is a project management tool through which councils and applicants can agree timescales, actions and resources for handling particularly large and/or complex applications. PPAs provide a framework for the timely consideration of an application by committing all parties to a project plan containing milestones that make clear what actions are required and how key planning issues are to be considered and resolved. The timescales are agreed by all parties, which has the result of 'exempting' the local planning authority (LPA) from the Government's standard of determining applications within the 13 or 16 week target (the latter would be applicable to this application). However the applicant would not agree to a PPA if a LPA proposed overly-lengthy timescales.

This PPA with MAG enables the Council to offer a six week consultation period (see later note) and a 20 week determination period; a Planning Committee has been scheduled for 18 July 2017 to consider this application.

The PPA commits MAG to fund additional resources for UDC and ECC to meet these timescales. For UDC that includes dedicated staff, project management resource and funding to commission external consultancy expertise. Applications relating to the airport have previously resulted in additional resources to process the applications being funded by the applicant, in acknowledgement of the impact such applications have on the planning service.

Separate to the PPA is the planning application fee, which is determined by statutory regulations. For this application that fee is just over £2K. Without the PPA, the Council's general fund (including council tax income) would be subsidising the determination of the application. In addition, the officer time required would adversely impact on the delivery of the planning service and would cause uncertainty in the process/timescales for determining this application and other applications.

The PPA addresses these issues for the benefit of the residents, members, staff, partners and the applicant.

**However, entering into a PPA does not impact on the planning authority in determining the outcome of the application, ie it does not give a guarantee of planning permission. The Planning Committee will be judging the application on its individual merits taking into account all relevant issues such as surface access and highways issues as well as comments made by the public and statutory consultees.**

As previously advised, it is the negotiated timescale by which the council is assessed for the purposes of the government's performance management of planning authorities, which means that providing we adhere to the timescales, the council will not be judged to have 'missed' their target determination time and therefore potentially bring the council within the government's designation scheme for planning authorities.

### **Consultation arrangements**

Consultation responses to this application are requested by 3 April 2018. During this time MAG are providing a number of public exhibition events (community outreach events they call them), the details of which have been circulated by MAG to councillors and town/parish councils. MAG are also publicising these events on social media.

Consultation responses are sought by 3 April 2018 in order that matters raised can be scheduled in for discussion with the applicant and other statutory bodies. The Council may also need to commission work to explore those issues further. It is important that interested parties engage with the issues expeditiously. Our experience with consultations suggests that a longer period does not necessarily result in better evidenced responses. Six weeks as the target period sets a reasonable balance between allowing consultees to undertake analysis of the issues that are relevant to their interests and enabling the planning team to consider carefully the points raised and to carry out further work as described above.

Having said that the Council is required to have regard to all comments received before the determination, including public comments made to the committee at its meeting. However, the more that can be fully considered and referenced in the report for committee members to consider, for the public to read and for the applicant to respond to, the better it is for all parties concerned.

Hatfield Heath PC have identified that their parish council do not meet until 4 April and I have given them full assurance that the council will welcome and consider their response received following that meeting.

At the request of a parish council, a briefing for all parish councils is being organised for Monday 26 March (6-8pm). This will be an officer briefing, similar to that offered to district councillors on Wednesday of this week. Any members who would like to attend will of course be very welcome.

A meeting is being arranged specifically for Stop Stansted Expansion to discuss their representation.

A number of members will be aware that MAG have facilitated the submission of representations in support of the application via their website. They have also provided a link to their staff which similarly generates a representation of support. These responses are separately identified on the council's website and are annotated 'Support Airport' whereas other representations are identified as 'Representation Letters'. The generation of such support emails is no different to the council receiving petitions supporting or opposing applications or standard letters often generated for residents to submit in support of or opposing an application; officers and members of the Planning Committee will weigh their contents accordingly.

Finally, regarding public consultation, members are reminded that two public speaking sessions have been arranged in addition to the public speaking slot at the Committee on 18 July. These sessions will take place on the afternoon and evening of 11 July and will be publicised widely nearer the time.

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I am on leave from the end of today until the Tuesday after Easter and so if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Roger or Gordon, who I have copied into this message.

Kind regards

Dawn French
Chief Executive
Uttlesford District Council