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Dear Supporter

Airport Planning Application

It is now more than ten months since Uttlesford District Council ("UDC") Planning Committee, by the narrowest of margins (the chairman's additional casting vote), conditionally resolved to permit Stansted Airport to increase its throughput to 43 million passengers per annum ("mppa").

SSE has argued from the outset that this planning application should not have been dealt with at local level, by UDC, but at national level, either by the Secretary of State for Transport or by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, both of whom have the statutory powers to require a planning application to be determined at national level.

Having wrestled with this airport planning application since the proposals were first put forward by Manchester Airports Group ("MAG") on 1 June 2017, UDC must now wish that they had taken SSE's advice and requested national determination. Dealing with this planning application has proved to be far more problematic than UDC (under the previous administration) had expected. The standard £2,000 planning application fee paid by MAG must, by now, have been spent a hundred times over by UDC on consultants and legal advice.

This saga is still far from being over. On 28 June 2019 UDC councillors voted to refer the airport planning application back to the Planning Committee for further consideration. This vote followed the delivery of a residents' petition, organised by SSE, which gathered 1,700 signatures in just 17 days, making it the biggest ever petition in the history of the Council.

It will inevitably take a considerable period of time for members of the current Planning Committee to familiarise themselves with the issues involved in this planning application so that they are sufficiently knowledgeable to make a reasoned decision. The composition of the Committee is very different from the Committee which approved the application last November. There are now twelve members, compared to ten previously, and seven of those are new to the Planning Committee. In fact, six are completely new to the Council. This is a complex application and there are now some 13,000 pages of documentation.

Whichever decision is made, it is likely to be challenged. If the Planning Committee were to refuse the application, MAG would almost certainly appeal. This would result in the Secretary of State setting up a Public Inquiry to consider all the issues. If the Planning Committee were to approve the application, SSE would almost certainly need to launch a legal challenge, not least to protect our position in relation to our existing legal challenge (see below). It's a case of 'watch this space'.

Legal Update

On 6 June, High Court judge, Mr Justice Dove, agreed to schedule a three-day hearing to consider SSE's legal challenge against both the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on the issue of whether the airport planning application should be determined nationally or locally. Mr Justice Dove also supported SSE's application for additional Government documents to be disclosed.

We received the requested disclosures in early August and the nature of this new information made it clear to us that the Secretary of State for Transport was the key decision-maker, not the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. After reviewing with our legal advisers, we decided that there was no longer any significant benefit to SSE in continuing to

Patron: Terry Waite CBE

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pursue our case against the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. We have therefore agreed with the other parties and the Court to call a halt to that aspect of our legal challenge (with no costs awarded to any party) and to focus on our challenge to the Secretary of State for Transport. The High Court hearing, for which three days has still been set aside, will take place from 12 to 14 November.

A good turnout in the High Court would help demonstrate to the Judge that there is considerable public interest in the case. We are therefore considering arranging coach travel (at cost). If you would be interested in this, please contact Sarah in the campaign office so that we can gauge the level of demand. You can email Sarah at info@stopstanstedexpansion.com or telephone 01279 870558. The phone is not always manned so please leave a voicemail message.

Health Impacts of Aviation

On 18 June the British Medical Journal ("BMJ") published a leading article on the health impacts of aviation noise co-authored by two of SSE's expert advisers and distinguished German cardiologist, Professor Thomas Menzel of Mainz University. The SSE experts were Professor Jangu Banatvala, a resident of Henham, who advises SSE on the health impacts of aircraft noise and pollution, and Martin Peachey, a Takeley resident whose expertise is in the field of aircraft noise impacts. Both have been members of the SSE Executive Committee for many years.

The BMJ article, entitled "The harms to health caused by aviation noise require urgent action", drew heavily upon the World Health Organisation's ("WHO") new Guidelines on Environmental Noise published in October 2018. The new WHO Guidelines, which took five years to complete and were compiled by worldwide leading experts, set out specific recommendations to safeguard the health of the population at risk from aviation noise impacts. For more information see <http://stopstanstedexpansion.com/press529.html>.

Airport Expansion 'Round-up'

We naturally focus on our own campaign at Stansted but it is sometimes worth reminding ourselves that all six London airports currently have plans for major expansion. Plans for a third runway at Heathrow continue apace, with a view to a 2026 opening. Heathrow currently handles 80mppa and a third runway could increase this to 130mppa. Meanwhile, Gatwick has announced plans to expand up to 70mppa, which compares to its present throughput of 46mppa, and Luton plans to grow to 36-38mppa – more than double the 17mppa it handled last year. London City airport has also announced plans to more than double in size from 5mppa last year to 11mppa by 2035. Although much smaller scale, Southend, which is officially classified as London's sixth airport, plans to grow from the present 2mppa to 5mppa by 2023 and is committed to growing to 10mppa. Finally, Stansted, which handled 28mppa last year, wants its cap raised from 35mppa to 43mppa. Thus, all six London airports are currently pressing for permission for major expansion. If all this additional capacity were to be approved, would there be sufficient demand to make use of it?

SSE Community Calendar

The 2020 edition of the SSE Calendar – the eighteenth to be produced – is now on sale, priced at £8, with all proceeds to our campaign funds. As always, the calendar features local photographs provided by volunteers. Please find enclosed further details about calendar stockists and mail order. In view of the current legal proceedings, it is vital that we have adequate funds available and so I hope you will help ensure that the SSE Calendar is once again a sell-out success.

Very many thanks for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely



Peter Sanders, Chairman