

AIRPORT IMPACT ON LOCAL HOUSE PRICES



SSE acknowledges the support of
Uttlesford District Council in the production of this leaflet.



House prices losing altitude

While house prices continue to soar across the South East, the threat of Stansted Airport becoming bigger than Heathrow has dealt a £572 million blow to Uttlesford homeowners, according to the official Land Registry Office statistics, highlighted in a recent SSE report.

The facts

- On average, house prices in Uttlesford have increased by less than half the rate compared to Essex as a whole since the airport expansion plans were announced in July 2002
- This shortfall is equivalent to almost £28,000 for the average Uttlesford homeowner
- The Government has told BAA that it must compensate local residents for the impact of generalised blight caused by its airport expansion proposals
- BAA intends to limit this to only 500 homes but the evidence shows that at least 12,000 properties have been impacted and possibly as many as 18,000-19,000
- BAA also intends to impose such strict conditions for compensation that many people would be ruled out with BAA acting as 'judge and jury'

Examples of these strict conditions are the need to demonstrate a 15% reduction in the value of your home and the need to demonstrate a "pressing reason to move." Stress and anxiety would be excluded from the list of admissible medical reasons. BAA also intends to exclude all rented properties from its compensation proposals.

BAA has the following obligation, as stated in the Government's Air Transport White Paper:

"The airport operator will need to put in place a scheme to address the problem of generalised blight resulting from the runway proposal."

The Government's Air Transport White Paper, Paragraph 11.41

Official Land Registry statistics

Increase in average house prices in Essex and Uttlesford between the base quarter (April-June 2002) and the final quarter of 2003 (the latest published statistics):

Type of House	Essex	Uttlesford	% Difference	£ Difference
Detached	24.0%	8.3%	15.7%	£47,598
Semi-detached	27.6%	16.9%	10.7%	£19,537
Terraced	31.2%	30.0%	1.2%	£1,660
Flat/maisonette	32.2%	25.1%	7.1%	£6,535
Overall	25.5%	12.7%	12.8%	£27,872

Source: Actual Land Registry Office statistics

Are you eligible for compensation from BAA?

BAA has published its main compensation proposals in a booklet entitled "Home Owners Support Scheme; A Consultation." Many local residents are unaware that this consultation is currently taking place. BAA has so far ignored requests from SSE and others to publicise its proposals more widely so that local residents have the information they need to form a considered view.

You can obtain a copy of the consultation booklet by phoning BAA on **0800 496 0199** or by sending an email to stansted.consultation@baa.com. We urge you to do this without delay and certainly in time to respond before the consultation closes on 31 May 2004.

If you have any difficulty in obtaining the information from BAA, Stop Stansted Expansion will be pleased to help. Phone the campaign office on **01279 870558** or contact us via email on info@stopstanstedexpansion.com.

The BAA consultation booklet and SSE's response - the full SSE report on which this leaflet is based - can also be accessed on our website www.stopstanstedexpansion.com

Seeking professional advice

If you believe you may have a case for compensation, you should seek proper professional advice.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) operates a Contact Centre Helpline on 0870 333 1600. This helpline puts callers in touch with experienced chartered surveyors locally who will provide up to 30 minutes free advice.

Local firms familiar with the housing market in the area include (but are not limited to):

Sworders: 01279 815300
Mullucks Wells: 01279 755400
FPD Savills: 01279 756800
Gearing and Co: 01279 758758
Snow Walker Associates: 01799 521761
Lloyd Williams: 01992 560561

Which areas are affected?

Examination of the Land Registry Office statistics by postcode area shows that house prices in the north west part of Uttlesford (those with Cambridge postcodes) have generally not been significantly affected. The main impacts,

perhaps not surprisingly, are upon properties in postcode areas nearest the airport and/or beneath flightpaths, with smaller properties usually less adversely affected than larger properties.

Postcode analysis showing the main areas where property prices have been most affected

Postcode	Approximate area covered	Actual % change in house prices over the 18 month period*
CM22 6..	Henham, Ugley, Elsenham, Takeley, Bamber's Green and Molehill Green	+0.9%
CM22 7..	Hatfield Heath, Hatfield Broad Oak, Little Hallingbury and Great Hallingbury	+2.2%
CM24 8..	Stansted Mountfitchet and Burton End	-2.0%
CM6 1..	Barnston, the Rodings, the Canfields and part of Great Dunmow	-3.2%

Source: Actual Land Registry Office statistics

* From the April-June quarter of 2002 to the October-December quarter of 2003

Other postcode areas have also been adversely affected, if not to the same extent, notably CM6 2..(Thaxted, Great Easton, Little Easton, Duton Hill, Broxton) and CM6 3..(Felsted, Stebbing and part of Great Dunmow).

It is likely that there are also impacts in other postcode areas, especially where

the postcode covers a wide area and where adverse impacts on villages closer to the airport may not be apparent if the majority of homes in the postcode area were largely unaffected. Similarly, it is likely that some properties in the eastern part of East Herts have been adversely affected,

Which noise contour?

BAA argues that the only homes affected by generalised blight are those within the 66 dBA Leq16 noise contour which would be created by a second runway. This would be a very small area (which BAA estimates would include only about 500 homes).

Generalised blight cannot neatly be defined by any noise contour. It is a function of the behaviour of the local property market. The impact varies from one town/village to the next and the impact of aircraft noise is not the sole issue; potential purchasers may also take account of other airport expansion implications such as increased pollution.

SSE considers that noise contours can only provide an approximate guide to eligibility but if a noise contour is to be chosen, then it should be the 50 dBA Leq16 contour. This would cover a much wider area – although it does not automatically follow that being inside the noise contour would guarantee compensation. There would still need to be evidence that the value of the property had been adversely affected.

It is very clear from the Land Registry Office statistics that the 50 dBA noise contour more closely corresponds to the size of area affected, than does the 66 dBA noise contour. In addition there is strong support from highly respected international bodies which points to a 50 dBA contour. The Department for Transport regards 57 dBA as the threshold which marks “the approximate onset of significant community annoyance.” However, a distinction needs to be drawn between urban and rural areas:

- The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recommends that noise levels in rural areas be 5 dBA lower than for urban areas.
- The International Standards Organisation goes further than the OECD, stating: “In quiet rural areas, this greater expectation for ‘peace and quiet’ may be equivalent to up to 10 dBA.”
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendation is even more specific: “To protect the majority of people from being moderately annoyed during the daytime, the outdoor sound pressure level should not exceed 50 dBA Leq.”

In view of these assessments and the actual evidence from the Land Registry statistics, BAA's proposal to limit eligibility to only 500 homes within the 66 dBA noise contour is quite simply preposterous. It should also be recognised that the calculation of the noise contour used by BAA creates a misleading impression because it excludes night noise and airport ground noise and it is based on an average over a 16 hour day – smoothing out the periods of intense aircraft noise with periods of general tranquillity.

It also averages the impact of south westerly operations (normally about five days a week at Stansted because of the prevailing wind conditions) with the impact of north easterly operations (normally about two days a week at Stansted). For these and other reasons, the noise contour (adjusted to reflect natural community boundaries) can only be a guide and we firmly believe that the most appropriate guide is the 50 dBA noise contour.



A message from Norman Mead

Chairman of Stop Stansted Expansion

BAA's attempt to restrict eligibility for compensation to homes within the 66 dBA noise contour flies in the face of the evidence showing the damage that has been inflicted upon the local property market since the expansion proposals were announced in July 2002. Many people who are currently trying to move home, for whatever reason, are being unfairly penalised through no fault of their own. There is an urgent need to address this problem.

It is not the role of Stop Stansted Expansion to negotiate with BAA on this matter but we believe it is our duty to ensure that local residents are made aware of what BAA is intending to do and to try our best to ensure fairness.

SSE is pledged to oppose BAA's plans for massive expansion of Stansted Airport and I am confident that we will ultimately prevail. Whatever the future holds, however, the impact on local property prices is a present day reality simply because of the THREAT of massive airport expansion. People should not be expected to suffer financial loss on the value of their homes as a consequence of BAA's proposals.

BAA is using the White Paper as its mandate to bring forward its expansion plans. Equally it should accept the obligations that the Government has placed upon it in the same document. BAA cannot be allowed to dine *à la carte* on the White Paper.

We urge you to write to Terry Morgan, Managing Director, BAA Stansted, Enterprise House, Stansted Airport, Essex CM24 IQW expressing your views and send a copy of your letter to your MP at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Even if you are not personally affected, many local communities are and amidst all the present uncertainty, these communities should at least be entitled to fair treatment.

Norman Mead
Chairman, Stop Stansted Expansion

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Stop Stansted Expansion is your campaign and needs your help. We now have more than 6,000 members and online supporters. Membership costs £10 a year. Please join us since a large membership base increases the influence we can bring to bear.

It also helps to fund campaign running costs, legal challenges, obtaining expert advice and commissioning special reports. Please also consider making a voluntary donation. Our ability to be an effective voice on behalf of the community depends on your support.



PLEASE SUPPORT STOP STANSTED EXPANSION

I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

and enclose a cheque for £10 (minimum annual subscription) payable to Stop Stansted Expansion. Full members automatically belong to the North West Essex and East Herts Preservation Association, SSE's parent body

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I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION

to the campaign fighting fund and enclose a cheque for £.....
(Please make cheques payable to Stop Stansted Expansion)

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I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP THE CAMPAIGN. Please

contact me to discuss how I might be able to help.

Post to:
Stop Stansted Expansion
PO Box 311, Takeley
Bishop's Stortford
Herts CM22 6PY

Contact us:
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