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Case Ref. 2032278

Appeal by BAA Ltd and Stansted Airport Ltd following the refusal by Uttlesford District Council of planning application UTT/0717/06/FUL

Proof of Evidence on behalf of Stop Stansted Expansion

Community Cohesion (Erosion of the Community)

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Personal details

- 1.1.1 My name is Maggie Sutton and I appear at the Public Inquiry on behalf of Stop Stansted Expansion ('SSE').

1.2 Qualifications and experience

- 1.2.1 I live at Browns End Cottage, Broxted in a Grade II listed building which, until January this year (2007), had been under the threat of demolition since 2002 to make way for a second runway at Stansted. My home is about three quarters of a mile from the flight path used by arriving aircraft (two out of three days) and is regularly directly overflowed by many departing aircraft on the days when planes take off to the North East.
- 1.2.2 I have lived here for 11 years with my husband and five children age 12 to 20, while two of my sisters and their families live within five miles. I am a former legal secretary, hold the position of Governor at Takeley Primary School and have formally served as a member of SSE's Executive Committee as Community Representative since 2003. I consider myself to be an active member of the local community. In the time I have lived here, the airport has grown to handle five times as many passengers as when I moved in.

2 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

2.1 Core evidence

- 2.1.1 The core of my evidence is based on the 'Erosion of the Community' report [CD/205] which Irene Jones and I submitted to Uttlesford District Council ('UDC') in August 2006 on behalf of SSE. This forms the body of this proof of evidence in section 5 and its three annexes.

2.2 Public presentations to UDC

- 2.2.1 During the week commencing 3 July 2006, in addition to representations from councils, public bodies, industry and environmental groups and various 'experts', approximately 50 members of the public gave oral evidence to UDC's Development Control Committee. These presentations (on 5 and 6 July) are an important source of evidence for this Inquiry, in assessing the impacts of the proposed development on the local community and I would like to present a sample of these webcast presentations in my evidence to the Inquiry.

3 SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY COHESION ISSUES

- 3.1.1 The Department of Communities and Local Government describes a cohesive community as one where “there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities”. It makes clear that “Community cohesion cannot be forcibly imposed by external agencies but has to be achieved through community members working together for the benefit of all.”¹
- 3.1.2 During UDC’s Community Engagement Week many people came forward to describe the very severe impacts which the airport’s operations are already having on our lives and the shape of the community, and how these impacts have worsened in recent years as a result of growth at the airport.
- 3.1.3 The nature of the questions which emerged, particularly in response to my own presentation and that of Irene Jones at the meeting on Wednesday 5 July, led to our decision to compile the Erosion of the Community Report, describing the experiences of people living in the villages in the immediate vicinity of the airport to give a flavour of current problems to those considering the planning application.
- 3.1.4 We live in a beautiful part of Essex which is treasured by many for its special character, countryside and community. Our neighbourhood extends from Broxton to include Takeley, Coopers End, Woodgates End, Chapel End, Bambers Green, Molehill Green, Little Easton, Great Easton, Duton Hill and Pledgdon. In the five years since consultations began on expanding airport capacity we have become firm friends with those in The Hallingburys, Hatfield Broad Oak and Hatfield Heath, Lindsell, Thaxted and beyond, sharing the great anxieties and concerns which have arisen because of BAA’s plans.
- 3.1.5 We have suffered many untruths, misinformation and broken promises from BAA with regard to its relentless expansion plans for Stansted and we have watched the life being sucked out of our villages because of fears of further expansion.
- 3.1.6 Since permission was granted for growth from 15 to 25 million passengers per annum in 2002, a great many changes have taken place. The airport is very rarely still. So many of us suffer constant air noise throughout the day and for much of the night. We are awoken repeatedly by airport activity and large, noisy cargo flights. Bed and breakfast establishments have begun to spring up around us together with airport related industrial units. We suffer air and light pollution, fly parking and increased road traffic. There are a great many accidents on our tiny lanes because the roads are so busy now. Airport cabs and other vehicles cut through our villages constantly and at speed at all times of the day and night.
- 3.1.7 We have suffered great loss to our community through people leaving because of the fears of what may come with further expansion. Expansion proposals have caused massive blight throughout the area on a scale which BAA has repeatedly refused to recognise, leading to widespread worry and stress which inevitably takes its toll on wellbeing and quality of life.
- 3.1.8 We have seen our villages fall into disrepair because of neglect by BAA which now owns so much property here. BAA’s short term tenants are not generally interested

¹ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1503278>

in getting involved in local or parish activities and do not have children at local schools. I have watched as 14 of my closest neighbours have moved because of the impacts and further fears about what expansion would bring, not least the worry and uncertainty of it all. I am sad to say that while I love my home, without near neighbours who share a sense of community, and little prospect of being able to find this at such an important time in the development of my children, we have taken the decision to move to a village five miles away to rejoin two of our former and closest Broxton neighbours and their families.

3.1.9 My experience is not unique and the accounts related in the Erosion of the Community Report which forms the body of this proof of evidence reveal the impacts as they are perceived by others, for example:

- Worsening noise disturbance from the increased frequency of overflying aircraft and of airport related road traffic;
- Light pollution ;
- Increasing numbers of cars on rat runs on local roads and lack of adequate public transport;
- Blight from expansion proposals;
- The breakdown of the social fabric of the community;
- Increased evidence of neglect by BAA-owned properties;
- The worry created by the mass of houses on the market, house price devaluation and the failure of BAA to pay compensation arising from previous expansion;
- Falling school numbers and fewer volunteers for community activities because of the rapid changes in the population profile (multi-occupancy rentals and relatively few families).

4 RESEARCH INTO THE EROSION OF THE COMMUNITY

4.1.1 During Uttlesford District Council's Community Engagement Week held in early July 2006 for the Development Control Committee to receive representations concerning BAA's planning application for expanding capacity of Stansted Airport's single runway, councillors were surprised to hear of the very severe impacts which the airport's operations are already having on our community and on the lives of the people who live here as a result of growth at the airport.

4.1.2 The nature of the questions which emerged, particularly in response to my neighbour Irene Jones and my presentations at the meeting on Wednesday 5 July (see Appendix I and II), led us to compile a report on the experiences of people living in the villages in the immediate vicinity of the airport to give a flavour of the current problems. As far as possible this used the words of those who are currently suffering these effects.

4.1.3 In summary, these accounts reveal the impacts already being felt from:

- Worsening noise disturbance from the increased frequency of overflying aircraft and of airport related road traffic;
- Light pollution from both aircraft and surface traffic;

- Increasing numbers of cars on rat runs on local roads;
- Blight from the uncertainty relating to expansion proposals;
- The breakdown of the social fabric of the community with the sudden influx of rental tenants who play no part in the ongoing life or upkeep of the community, or in maintaining its fabric in terms of social interaction;
- Increased evidence of neglect by BAA of homes which have been bought under its “buy and bulldoze” Home Value Guarantee Scheme, either because they are empty or rented to disinterested or financially stretched tenants;
- The worry created by the mass of houses on the market under the Home Owner Support Scheme which has created uncertainty and worry for those who are both within and outside the scheme;
- House price devaluation and the failure of BAA to pay compensation arising from previous expansion;
- Falling school numbers and fewer volunteers for community activities because of the rapid changes in the population profile, not least an increase in the number of multi-occupancy rental properties amongst which there are relatively few families.

5 THE FINDINGS

5.1 The Hallingburys

Norman Mead, resident of Great Hallingbury, writes:

- 5.1.1 This area has undergone some 40 years of uncertainty in respect of the development of Stansted Airport, during which inquiry after inquiry has ruled against major expansion. The single runway capacity is now comparable with the 50mppa proposed more than two decades ago for the two runway airport so firmly turned down by Inspector Graham Eyre in the 1980's Public Inquiry. Residents who value their quality of life more than ever before have had enough of BAA's policy of insidious incrementalism supported by Governments and very much resent the public deception which continues to accompany it.
- 5.1.2 The failure of BAA to deal with the problem of generalised blight as required by the Air Transport White Paper is also a matter of great local concern. No land compensation as required by the 1974 Act has been paid since 1992, when residents were compensated for the devaluation of their properties arising from the completion of facilities for 8mppa in 1991. They now suffer further devaluation from the effects of 23mppa for which there is currently no redress. The Home Owner Support Scheme scheme can hardly be described as user-friendly, and selling through BAA is as much of a nightmare as living with the planes.
- 5.1.3 Residents are aware of the importance of Stansted Airport to the local and regional economy but wish to point out that further expansion must not take place without full and proper account being taken of its impact on this area and in particular on this village and its people. Whilst the interests of airport passengers, although

important, are essentially transient, their total effect on our residents and their quality of life occurs minute by minute, hour by hour and day by day.

- 5.1.4 As residents see the destruction of long established communities already taking place in the Takeley and Broxted areas and other undesirable demographic changes elsewhere, they are determined that this shall not happen here in the Hallingburys. They are more than ever mindful of their duty to preserve and enhance the amenities of their villages and to protect and improve the quality of life. The concept of any significant increase in the currently approved 25mppa on the existing runway is incompatible with these objectives. But this is a community living in limbo - exacerbated by the takeover of BAA by Ferrovial and worsened by deferral of a decision on its future plans.

5.2 Great Hallingbury

- 5.2.1 The Parish of Great Hallingbury with its 529 Registered Electors plus children forms part of the southern area of Uttlesford District. It is immediately to the south of the B1256 and Stansted Airport, with the ancient Forest of Hatfield forming its eastern border. It extends westwards almost to the River Stort and southwards to the neighbouring Parish of Little Hallingbury.
- 5.2.2 Uttlesford District is rich in important environment features and heritage items and is probably top of the league in these respects when compared with all other districts of Essex. Great Hallingbury has a good share of these with, for example, 59 listed buildings. It is a widespread parish covering no less than five square miles and comprises a number of distinct communities surrounding Hallingbury Place which itself is an Area of Ancient Parkland. There is a substantial industrial estate to the south of the B1256 and the parish otherwise is mainly agricultural served by four major farms.
- 5.2.3 The village is administered by active parish and parochial church councils. It has an attractive church, a thriving private school, a popular village hall, hotel, restaurant and public house. Activities include a branch of the Women's Institute, a local history society, bowls club, Brownies, Friendship Club for Senior Citizens and four equestrian centres.
- 5.2.4 However, local services are limited. The single bus service (to Bishop's Stortford, some three miles away) operates on only one day a week (on Thursday). Whilst there is a major sewage treatment works in the village serving Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport, there are no mains drainage connections to village properties. Electricity is supplied via overhead lines but no gas is available in the village.
- 5.2.5 The M11 Motorway runs through the village with Junction 8 just within its north-western boundary. The village lanes, partly covered by a poorly enforced 30mph speed limit, form part of the "rat runs" to and from the south to the motorway junction and to Stansted Airport. Traffic has materially increased in recent years and this, together with the lack of paved paths, represents a considerable hazard to the many pedestrians, ramblers, cyclists and horse riders who enjoy our still attractive countryside.
- 5.2.6 All aircraft landing and taking off from Stansted Airport to and from the south pass over the village, and aircraft noise from the present throughput of some 23 million passengers per annum adversely affects the quality of life of residents – adults and children – particularly in the summer months.

- 5.2.7 The crash of the Korean Air Jumbo jet in 1999 was, and still is, a grim reminder of the down side of airport activity. The environmental sustainability of the currently approved 25mppa has yet to be proven to the satisfaction of residents and the proposal almost to double the present level of activity with the full use of Stansted's single runway is a matter of the gravest local concern.

5.3 Little Hallingbury

- 5.3.1 Little Hallingbury lies to the south of Great Hallingbury and extends southwards to the borders of Hatfield Heath and Sawbridgeworth. It is bordered to the west by the River Stort and extends to the east to embrace Little Hallingbury Park.
- 5.3.2 With a present population of 1167 plus children, it is a thriving village community and, like Great Hallingbury, has active parish and parochial church councils. It has a local history society, two popular public houses with many other activities taking place in the village hall. It has many beautiful features with its seven greens, restored water mill and marina, 51 listed buildings, Iron Age earthworks and the site of a Roman villa.
- 5.3.3 The village school has some 130/140 pupils from both Great and Little Hallingbury but noise levels here have been measured and found to exceed acceptable limits.
- 5.3.4 The village hall has many activities with a very busy playgroup every morning. Afternoons and evenings are booked with more than 20 clubs and organisations from aerobics to yoga. The age group using these activities is usually the under 11s and the over 50s but many people in the middle age group are usually too busy commuting to get involved in village life.
- 5.3.5 Regrettably the village is very adversely affected by the increase in air and road traffic. The pleasant country lanes are now becoming too dangerous to walk, cycle, or horse ride along as they are being used as fast "rat-runs" to and from the M11 junction 8 and Stansted Airport – for example along Dell Lane. Traffic levels on the main A1060 that runs through the centre of the village are of particular concern and there have been numerous accidents, particularly in the area of the school and village hall which attracts many pedestrians. The increased traffic along this road has given rise to constant sleep disturbance to residents.
- 5.3.6 As for flight paths, the village lies between the westerly Buzad route and the glide path to Runway 05 which are just to the north of it beyond Latchmore Bank (which suffers most from airport noise from the runway being closest to it as well as noise from the nearby M11) and the southerly Dover and Clacton routes to the east. The entire village is within the swathes associated with these routes. Noise contours predicted for the 25mppa level show that the bulk of the village will be within the 57 dbA Leq contour for an average 16 hour summer day with areas at Latchmore Bank within the 60 dbA Leq contour. Somewhat surprisingly, BAA's predictions for the 35mppa level show the latter area within the 57dbALeq contour, with the rest of the village outside it. The local churches and BAA are in discussion about protecting the fabric of the affected churches but how does one double glaze a stained glass window?
- 5.3.7 The impacts of both air and road traffic are of great concern throughout the village.
- 5.3.8 At Goose Lane, for example, M11 traffic noise is the major problem. If an additional lane were to be added to the motorway, the increase in noise would be intolerable and adversely affect the entire village.

- 5.3.9 Wrights Green and Motts Green, the two largest greens in the village and much valued amenities for walking and playing, both suffer very greatly from aircraft and M11 noise.
- 5.3.10 Hall, Hatch and George Greens, along the A1060, have all been reduced in size by road alterations to cope with the increase in traffic over the years.
- 5.3.11 Sir Thomas Sutton purchased the Manor of Little Hallingbury in 1588. He planned to build a school and hospital here but finally decided to use Howard House in London naming it Sutton's Hospital in Charterhouse. He presented the land and the Manor to the Governors of Charterhouse who thus became patrons of the living of the church of St. Mary. Contact is still strong with Charterhouse in the City of London. From time to time the Master visits Little Hallingbury with the Brothers and preaches on occasions in St. Mary's Church. Since 1929 all deceased Brothers of the Charterhouse may be buried in a special section of the churchyard which is owned by their Governors. But how can people peacefully pay respects at a graveside and remember their loved ones with the roar of jet engines overhead?

5.4 Takeley

Martin Peachey resident of Brewers End, Takeley, writes:

- 5.4.1 I came to live in Takeley in 1971 and we brought up three children here. These last 35 years have been the longest period by far that I've stayed in any one place.
- 5.4.2 It would be unusual if there hadn't been any changes. But the largest change has been the scale of urbanisation, and the pace of this change has been increasing.
- 5.4.3 But whilst there have been new house completions, the inescapable major increase in activity in this area in the last four years has been due to an extra seven million passengers a year going through the airport. In particular there is an increasing number of empty National Express coaches which shuttle backwards and forwards between the Start Hill Coach Depot and the airport, using Takeley Village as a rat run. These coaches run from early in the morning until late in the evening and continue throughout the weekend. This is a good example of the unwelcome, unforeseen consequences of the airport growth. These coaches should be using the A120 bypass, but they don't.
- 5.4.4 The situation is exacerbated by the housing blight caused by the continuing uncertainty over airport expansion. People in Takeley have found it difficult to sell their houses at a time and price that they have some control over. Their houses are eventually sold under a very restricted HOSS scheme which only includes parts of Takeley and so is divisive within the village. The result is either empty or rented properties. A bungalow next door to me has now been empty all summer. It is starting to suffer from neglect. And it's become noisier here. When the A120 bypass was opened in December 2003, there was considerable relief from the road noise previously experienced in Takeley. However, since that time, the road noise on the B1256 through Takeley has been steadily increasing as more traffic has come back onto the road.
- 5.4.5 The growing number of people who use the area as a "dormitory" never seem to contribute to the local scene. It always seems to be the same old people who give their time. Well, we are all old now and if there is nobody to take over the reins these village activities will die. A good example is Takeley Parish Council which

has been really well served by local people over the years – some of whom have put in around 30 years. But it's going to be really hard to find replacements as very few people are coming forward because the sense of community is disappearing.

5.5 Bangers Green and Smiths Green

- 5.5.1 Heading towards Bangers Green and Smiths Green from Waltham Hall Farm visitors are struck by the ancient woodland and hedgerows on either side of the lane. Many of the trees are enormous, very beautiful and centuries old. How could it ever be that they could be sacrificed without a thought to make way for an expanding airport? But everything has changed here in the last two years as a result of airport expansion proposals and today barely a handful of homes are still lived in by their owners. The rest of the homes in Bangers Green are empty or short airport lets – including The Grange with its Grade I listed moat – even though a planning application for a second runway hasn't even been submitted.

Tricia Barber, resident of Smiths Green, writes:

- 5.5.2 I have lived in Takeley for 36 years. I was born and educated in Bishops Stortford. I have opposed major expansion at Stansted Airport for many years and have been an active member of NWEHPA since 1979. I have been a parish councillor for about 14 years and a member of the parochial church council of the parish church for longer than that.
- 5.5.3 The village has lived with the threat of airport expansion for many years - indeed the parish council has spend a lot of time and money in fighting to keep the identity of the village when faced with development of the airport and also with proposals for the development of airport related housing. Up to now it has been successful in doing so though living so close to a major airport we are well aware of the effects, especially noise and light pollution, village 'rat-runs' and fly parking.
- 5.5.4 I am very angry and sad about the effect the current proposals for airport development are having on Takeley. The community of Bangers Green has already gone - nearly all the houses having been bought by BAA in the Home Value Guarantee Scheme. Meanwhile, many people are now moving out of Takeley under the Home Owners Support Scheme. If you walk around the centre of Takeley the number of 'For Sale' boards is quite depressing. I know of people who had no intention of moving but now feel compelled to do so as all the houses around them are being sold to BAA and they do not wish to live in a road where most of the houses are being rented out – a lot of them to aircrew who come and go at all hours of the day and night. There are others who are not moving but are feeling very unhappy and unsettled because of the present state of the village. We had a very successful social event in the village a couple of weeks ago, Sadly, were we to repeat this next year as has been suggested, a lot of the people taking part will have moved away.
- 5.5.5 The village school in Takeley which, until a couple of years ago, had been oversubscribed has now lost 25% of its roll and if one of the teachers had not been leaving it would have been necessary to make a member of staff redundant. The housing development at Morrells Green so far has very few families with children living in it. We know five of the houses have been bought and let by one person – not good news.

- 5.5.6 Takeley needs to become a normal village again with the threat of airport development lifted.
- 5.5.7 From the Cobbs Lane end of Bambers Green all the way to the new bridge over the A120 no more than four homes remain owner occupied, neatly maintained – in stark contrast to the general dilapidation and uncared for look of the airport-owned properties, whether empty or let. This was once a village where the hedges and gardens were a sight to behold. Today, it is impossible to escape the great sense of emptiness and abandonment of a mortally wounded community whose life has been sucked from it by the airport.

Pat and Dave Osgood, formerly residents of Bambers Green, write:

- 5.5.8 We first moved to Spring Lodge some 14 years ago – a ‘run down’ 400 year old Grade 2 listed house and gardens which we then spent 12 years restoring under the guidance of Uttlesford District Council’s listing officer. The result was a property of wonderful historic value yet with all the requirements of modern living.
- 5.5.9 In 2002 we learnt about the Government’s support for BAA’s plans to ‘over-develop’ Stansted Airport. Two years after the White Paper, but with great misgivings, we eventually sold our beautiful home and its surrounding land to BAA under the Home Value Guarantee Scheme. We now suffer the ‘heartache’ of watching our former home – now rented out for multi-occupancy – gradually returning to the derelict state in which we originally found it.
- 5.5.10 But this isn’t all we see: the deterioration of the whole area is evident, including neglected, hedges, verges, and gardens. We also see the struggles of our local friends and families left behind with little or no support, particularly for the elderly.

5.6 Coopers End

- 5.6.1 At the tiny Coopers End roundabout at the edge of Stansted Airport there once stood a thriving village. Now, apart from a very few houses along the road towards Takeley, there is little left. Only two homes are still privately owned, standing either side of a busy road which runs between Takeley and Molehill Green. Meanwhile, Waltham Hall farmhouse and land have been sold to BAA although the industrial unit is still owned by the Latham family of farmers. The banks along the Takeley-Molehill Green road are lush but unkempt and extremely dirty from the constant pounding by airport related traffic.

John and Rosemary Welch, residents of Coopers End, write:

- 5.6.2 We married in 1972 and moved into our idyllic thatched cottage, surrounded by fields, peace and tranquillity that year. Within four years we had two children and joined in village life: playgroups, WEA, church functions and much more. Many friendships were formed and we felt we were living within the heart of a wonderful village community. The contrast with today could not be greater because of the expansion threat.
- 5.6.3 Already, it is extremely sad to see the once-immaculate houses now in BAA ownership and looking shabby and overgrown. Old houses in particular need lots of maintenance. Being used as casual lets takes it toll very quickly. The pride in the area is gone and despondency and malaise are setting in amongst those who remain.

- 5.6.4 Our quality of life is suffering. While we have been experiencing such warm weather we have been sitting out in the garden where the constant drone of engines revving up – peaking for take off – and followed immediately by more constant droning has become extremely disconcerting. This background noise continues virtually throughout the day and night. With the need to keep windows open, it is very difficult to sleep.
- 5.6.5 Community life is still hanging on by a thread in Takeley, but things are changing. People are frightened of what the future may hold and feel under pressure to move away from the constant threat of the airport expansion to a more peaceful existence where they don't have to fight any more. They will be irreplaceable, having committed years of dedication to building up our thriving community. We have lost, and will continue to lose, very dear friends.
- 5.6.6 It is alarming to realise that we, as a community are losing our children, our future for the area. The number of pupils attending the local primary school at Takeley has fallen drastically. Families have moved from the area and in their place come the childless airport workers looking for a home nearby to complete their unsociable and long hours of work.
- 5.6.7 It is heartbreaking to realise that if the passenger numbers increases beyond what has already been approved life here will be intolerable for all of us. It will be death of this community. The one we have loved and invested in for the largest part of our lives. All that will be left to show for that investment will be a monster airport.
- 5.6.8 Coopers End has seen the biggest destruction of all the local villages over the years. Many years ago three of its finest homes of historic value were taken away piece by piece by BAA. Two were reconstructed in other places, the third remains in boxes in a warehouse. In short, this village was blatantly torn apart with little regard for those left here.
- 5.6.9 It is intriguing – and of concern – that a further three properties have gone from the area since BAA bought them decades years ago. These include one which was partly destroyed by fire, and a smallholding with a brick-built house which was situated very close to the property of Pat Salmon, a local historian and former postman who has lived his whole life where Coopers End and Molehill Green meet.

Pat Salmon, resident of Millend Green, between Coopers End and Molehill Green, writes:

- 5.6.10 Molehill Green is now more like a satellite of the airport. Out of the whole village I doubt that I now know more than about half a dozen people living here. People have taken the money and gone, not because they wanted to but because they believed they might not get as much if they are eventually compulsorily purchased. It is like psychological blackmail on the part of BAA
- 5.6.11 As for me, what can I do at my age? I was born in my house 70 years ago. The only relative I have is my sister who lives at Bambers Green. Where am I supposed to go? Where could I escape?
- 5.6.12 As for what was my immediate community, is it a coincidence that three houses at Mill End, all owned by BAA, have disappeared? They were Teagles, Mill House

and Tam-o-Shanter. BAA also own most of the houses in Bambers Green where it would seem that many are now used as bed and breakfast, official or unofficial.

- 5.6.13 As for the noise, the smell and the pollution, sometimes you can almost cut it with a knife. I am plagued with cars parking in my gateway as they wait for flights to arrive. I have had to wake people up before now so I can get out of my drive. Some sit there throwing rubbish out of their cars, too.
- 5.6.14 For me in this hot weather it is impossible to sleep. If I have the back windows open the planes keep me awake and if I have the front windows open the traffic keeps me awake. Surrounded. I just can't win.
- 5.6.15 We are not just talking about another runway – though acres more land would be lost if a further runway were allowed to go ahead and I would like to show Councillors the view from Cobbs Lane in Bambers Green so they could take in the enormity of what is being proposed. No, the effects of expansion are here now.
- 5.6.16 Somewhere this all has to stop: I suggest now is a good time before it is too late.

5.7 Molehill Green

- 5.7.1 The common land at Molehill Green is owned by Takeley Parish Council. Overlooking it are three houses, airport owned and sad and neglected in their rented state as care homes for young adults.
- 5.7.2 Next to them is the village forge where the current blacksmith, Ron Halls still operates. He is the son of Frederick who bought the business in 1950 from his employer Arthur Cornell when Frederick was an apprentice and the latest in a long line of blacksmiths working the forge since the early 1800's. Next door is a small terrace where the only village store and the post office can be found.
- 5.7.3 The Three Horseshoes village pub at Molehill Green – blighted by all current second runway options – is a symbol of hope at present since at last the thatched roof is being replaced. It is a welcome sign of investment into the future of the community.
- 5.7.4 The houses in School Lane (with the exception of two privately owned homes and three council properties) have all been owned by BAA since before the 1981-83 Public Inquiry, despite a Parliamentary requirement for the houses to be sold back by BAA two decades ago. Many of them are listed buildings but are run down and in need of repair. One of the few remaining owner-occupied homes has recently been bought up following the death of its owner, Maud Salmon.

Mrs Gladys Wilson, resident of Molehill Green, writes:

- 5.7.5 I was born in 1911 at the Blacksmith's Forge, just over the road from where I live now. I am now aged 95 years. I think I can safely say I am the oldest owner-occupier in this area. Also, I think I have lived here for the longest time.
- 5.7.6 As a child my family moved to a bigger house across the road. I went to Stortford School by rail from Takeley to Bishop Stortford. Later I married but my husband, a pilot, was killed in the War and because of the shock I miscarried my only child.
- 5.7.7 I built Lyddon House in the grounds of my parents former home and we sold the old house. I have great pride in this house and how I, personally, designed it. Every single day as soon as I am up – which is early – I open my door to let the world in. My parents' old house is now owned by BAA, along with almost all other houses in the area. It is rented out.
- 5.7.8 I have stayed in Molehill Green most of my life but for twice travelling around the world. Twenty five years ago I returned from my travels determined to die here but I'm not ready yet.
- 5.7.9 I have seen a great many changes. I am very saddened to see my community completely eroded. Everything here seems now to belong to Stansted Airport. Our homes, our shop, all we see.
- 5.7.10 I have a very great hope that before I die I will know that the attempt to destroy my home and my village will be quashed. That the devastation so long threatened will be stopped once and for all. You see I still have hope.

5.8 Woodgates End

- 5.8.1 On the road from Molehill Green through Chapel End to Woodgates End – both in Broxton – all but three of the 20 or so houses on the same side of the road as the Three Horseshoes pub have also been owned for many years by BAA: the legacy of previous attempts to expand in the past. A great many of the houses and attached gardens are unkempt and look awful. The eight houses on the opposite side of the road are council owned.
- 5.8.2 The sight of BAA-owned Rats Castle is a shocking one for local people to bear, now that the house is boarded up and awaits demolition. If it were situated in London it would be refurbished. But because airport expansion is being proposed, it is being left to rot – not worth the investment risk. Again, it is a sign that the community does not matter to the airport's owners and this is something that points to things to come if expansion is allowed to proceed unchecked. Its message is clearly that BAA does not care whether the community becomes run-down, scruffy, or derelict. That local villages and their people, their sense of community, have no meaning for the airport other than as something to be cleared out of the way.
- 5.8.3 Further along is Woodgates Farm, also owned by BAA and now used as industrial units. In fact, BAA has owned all the houses from this point onwards down to the junction at Brick End Broxton for many years – apart from Pink Cottage, Garrolds Farm, Ivy Cottage and Walnut Tree Cottage at the end of the road. The BAA-owned properties suffer terrible neglect.

- 5.8.4 Meanwhile, the road itself is increasingly dangerous, resulting in frequent accidents.

Caroline Barrett, resident of Woodgates End, writes:

- 5.8.5 I have lived at Woodgates End, Broxted with my husband and three children for the last six years. We came to escape the madness of urban life in London and to find 'the good life'. We did it for our children. We wanted, as all parents do, the very best life for them. They experienced the local school in Great Easton. It was small, had good standards and was in the middle of fantastic countryside. How lucky they were for that experience.
- 5.8.6 We did not realise straight away that the house which we had chosen to buy was completely surrounded by houses which were owned by BAA – many of them listed. As the years have passed, though, it is only our house that receives a lick of paint, has an occasional hanging basket or sees its hedge properly cut.
- 5.8.7 The young girl living to one side of our property told us that her thatched Grade 2 listed building had been condemned at one stage and they were not paying rent. On the other side the tiny property is often left empty and has had a lot of different tenants. There are always some sort of structural problems occurring that the tenants try to ignore and live with or patch up with temporary DIY fixes. Most of them (if not all) work for the airport anyway. Because of the time that has elapsed since these properties were owned by anyone other than BAA they are all looking extremely sad and in need of attention.
- 5.8.8 Our stretch of road is very busy road and the traffic (including extremely large lorries) travels far too fast. There are always accidents and, in fact, in the last two months there have been at least three bad accidents along this stretch of road to my knowledge.
- 5.8.9 The school bus stops outside my home to pick up and drop off my children. The driver has witnessed just how dangerous it is to alight when all the traffic travelling in both directions seems to want to overtake the bus rather than wait until the children are safely out of harms way.
- 5.8.10 I am angry that traffic calming measures have not yet been put in place when it is obvious that, due to the increase of passengers at Stansted over recent years the related growth in road traffic is not taken into account or the effects addressed. We should be better protected, especially from the industrial traffic that currently passes through and the authorities need to take responsibility for managing traffic flow and slowing down our roads around the airport. If not done now, what will happen in the future?
- 5.8.11 But while we want the current effects of the airport to be properly managed, most of all we want our lives back from the blight that has fallen on this community and the sheer frustration of being trapped in a situation which no-one should have to go through. There are times when I just want to scream STOP! End the nightmare, let us have our lives back again.

5.9 Broxted

- 5.9.1 Following Browns End Road from The Prince of Wales pub, the scale of the havoc which BAA has wreaked upon the community since the Air Transport White Paper is clearly felt.
- 5.9.2 There is no protection for homes at the start of the road and it is not until past the Village Hall, Chitlands, The Cottage and Dapifers that the Home Value Guarantee Scheme applies. Shepherds Hey, Millfields, The Bungalow, Elgon, Highfields, Pages Cottage, Knowles Cottage, Browns End Cottage and North Hall are all in BAA ownership or in the process of being acquired by the company. Some are let back to the former owners on a temporary basis, most of the rest are empty.
- 5.9.3 The land bordering the homes remains in the possession of the Smith family whose members have farmed for generations in Broxted and who remain valued members of the community.
- 5.9.4 Other land farmed by the Latham family in Broxted until recently has since been sold to commercial developers Land Securities who have their eye on the development potential of land close to the airport if permission is given to expand. This company has also bought up significant landholdings – formerly “Countess of Warwick” land – in both Broxted and Little Easton amounting to 650 hectares (1625 acres). According to its 2006 Annual Report, Land Securities hopes to use the land for uses in connection with Stansted and for housing development, as well as for the extraction of four million tonnes of sand and gravel through an option with Aggregate Industries plc. No doubt the company would also be seeking to create landfill sites to backfill the extracted areas.
- 5.9.5 Little wonder that those who remain are fearful for the shape of the community in the future, beyond the terrible disturbance and upheaval which has been caused by the airport’s operations.

Roger Clark, resident of Browns End Road, writes:

- 5.9.6 It is not just the aircraft noise which is intrusive and annoying, the ‘beeping’ noise made by reversing vehicles in the airport is tiresome, as is the frequent wail of police sirens, both of which are clearly heard in Broxted. A neighbour’s daughter who lives and works in New York City said, on a recent visit, that parts of Broxted at night are noisier than New York.
- 5.9.7 It is not just those houses owned by BAA that have multiple tenants, or tenants uninterested in the village which have created a problem. People who have been unable to sell have moved away and let out their homes.
- 5.9.8 The effect on institutions like the village hall is double-edged. People cannot be found to support the committee and its fundraising, and there are so few lettings that the hall is becoming unviable. Bills like insurance (at about £1,000 a year) still have to be paid. It would be a great shame to lose the hall after more than 70 years. The effect of fewer families in the area means fewer children enrolling at local primary schools.
- 5.9.9 Much of the increased traffic on our lanes seems to be taxis, which by their very nature always seem to be in a hurry and are oblivious to what few speed limits we have.

- 5.9.10 As citizens of Uttlesford we suffer, because the Planning Department has to devote so much of its limited resources to airport matters; there is a feeling that they are not diligent enough in areas like enforcement (it took two and a half years to clear the dumped cars from Chitterlands, opposite the pub). We face the constant threat of another park and ride scheme, together with regular flyparking.
- 5.9.11 The sudden influx of new people in the area who are out at work all day or working strange shifts means that there is an increase in strangers in the village. It is difficult to know who people are and this affects things like neighbourhood watch. It also affects things like church congregations and is seen in a lack of support for community events. In Broxton we rarely have any input to make to the Five Parishes Magazine as very little now takes place.
- 5.9.12 Finally, because of the continuing threat from the airport with its insidious creeping growth, many fine people are – necessarily – diverting their time, talents, energy and fundraising skills to fighting expansion, instead of to our local Scouts, Guides, schools and churches.

Maggie Sutton, resident of Browns End Cottage, Broxton, writes:

- 5.9.13 As I drive down the lane to my home these days my heart sinks. I feel so very sad at what I see. Even if some of the rented homes are having their grass cut, once tended hedges, trees and gardens, hanging baskets and even, already, peeling paintwork tell a different story about the real level of care being given. I hardly know a soul who lives here anymore. I do not recognise the dog pulling at the bin bags which have been left outside one of the properties for months now. I suddenly feel as vulnerable as the empty houses around me and miss the impromptu barbeques and invites to share a bottle of wine or the wave of acknowledgement in the lanes as I pass by.
- 5.9.14 Being part of community life is what was so special about living here.
- 5.9.15 The properties are still very familiar to me. I care about them all. It was just six years ago that three of the cottages very close to mine (Shepherds Hey, Millfields and Knowles) were re-thatched, taking the best part of six months to finish, and the road stood to attention with great pride at the investment. Lucky, I think, for them, that this work has been recently carried out so as to protect them for many more years in their wilderness of neglect.
- 5.9.16 In this part of Broxton the ground noise from the airport is another big issue and it would appear the airport never sleeps. It thunders and crashes from very early morning until late in the evening. In fact many times during the night it springs into life as yet another plane roars into the night sky. Often, because of its suddenness, it wakes us from our sleep.
- 5.9.17 There are many more cars than ever driving along the lanes at all times of the day and night, with car headlights flooding into the bedroom as each one winds its way down the lane. I do not ever remember it being so frequent and can only assume it to be shift workers or people looking for the bed and breakfast establishments or car parking which have suddenly sprung up all around.
- 5.9.18 I wonder and desperately hope that very quickly the fate of this area can be salvaged should a new preferred application for a second runway be announced at the end of this year and these lovely homes are not now required. It would be a travesty if these properties are allowed to fall into complete disrepair as has

happened in places like Molehill Green and Coopers End while BAA 'keeps its options open'.

- 5.9.19 How can it be right that business, money and planes can be put before REAL people's lives? We have been given such a wonderful place to enjoy. We have had such fantastic benefits living here. Living next door to an airport which will service 25 million passengers per year is more than enough for any community to be asked to cope with. We are on the edge of becoming a community in an airport and pretty soon that community will be lost forever.
- 5.9.20 Heading from Broxted Hill (towards the Maltings and Church End) leads to a stunning Grade 2 listed building named Muscombs which has remained unlet for the last two years since BAA bought it. Walking past at night there are never any lights on and it has become an old but beautiful house whose heart has stopped beating. Muscombs Cottage, very close by, is also now owned by BAA and is rented out, although the house beyond, while also owned by BAA, has been unoccupied for over a year.
- 5.9.21 At Moor End Farm, the Burton family continue to farm and offer holiday accommodation. While the farm falls within the perimeter of the Home Value Guarantee Scheme, houses further on at The Maltings are not covered – despite being directly under the flight path and suffering constant interruption from noise. Nor is Church End Broxted covered, despite the fact that noise from overflying is at its loudest here from (mainly) arriving planes.

Irene Jones, resident of Peacocks, The Maltings, Broxted, writes:

- 5.9.22 My husband Keith and I moved into Peacocks with our family in 1977. We knew there was an airport nearby and at that time the throughput was 250,000 passengers per year. Searches had indicated that permission had been granted to increase this number to 2 million passengers per annum. We were prepared to live with this, believing naively, that this was a finite decision.
- 5.9.23 Peacocks was at that time a small bungalow of four rooms. A small utility room served as a kitchen. The toilet and bath were in a building just outside the bungalow. There was no hot water. We bought Peacocks because we wanted a piece of land so that we could grow our own food and keep chickens.
- 5.9.24 We went ahead with a building program to give us a house big enough for our family and at the same time began to clear the land and plant it up. So imagine our dismay when, after only one year, we learned that Stansted was on a shortlist to be developed as London's third airport. But we loved where we had chosen to live and had made a commitment to turn Peacocks into a home to cherish and be proud of. Needless to say, we did not accept this decision lightly. I joined NWEHPA and have fought against the growth of Stansted ever since.
- 5.9.25 How has this growth, (and this is an apt word as it is like a cancer), affected our lives? When we first came to Broxted it was so peaceful. The only sounds were the birds, the wind, the rain, the stream running its course in the valley below, all part of the environment. Occasionally farm machinery could be heard, but that didn't matter, it was part of the life of the countryside. And it stopped when the job was done.
- 5.9.26 Now we rarely get respite from overflying aircraft, noise from the airport, traffic on our once quiet lane. One evening recently, when the weather was hot and the

house was close and stuffy, I sought refuge in the garden for a breath of cooler air. I was reduced to tears because I couldn't escape from the noise of the aircraft flying over.

- 5.9.27 Will this ever end? Must we watch as this beautiful part of the world is gradually destroyed? We don't want to move. We are retired now and continue to enjoy the fruits of our labours from the garden. Life goes on and there is still work to do on the house but as each task is completed, there is a sense of satisfaction.
- 5.9.28 Peacocks is very precious to us. It has a place in its environment, recognised by others in our community because of its part in the past. But it must have a future too, because my children, and grandchildren must not be made to feel their past was not worthwhile.

Nathan Boister-Jones of Peacocks, The Maltings, Broxted, writes:

- 5.9.29 I live with my father and grandparents at Peacocks. I am 14 years old and will be beginning work for my GCSE's in September. When I am doing my coursework at home I often find it difficult to concentrate when planes are taking off over our house. I also find it difficult to sleep, especially on hot nights, when you need the windows open for air. Instead you get noise.
- 5.9.30 I don't believe any more growth is needed at the airport. This is a prosperous area and there is little unemployment. My future prospects do not depend on the expansion of Stansted. My future depends on me being able to work to the best of my ability – now.

5.10 Great Easton

- 5.10.1 At Broxted Hill (Water Lane) the buildings and fields belong to the Smith family of farmers. Just beyond, where Broxted meets the parish of Great Easton is Rushy Mead, a house which has just been bought up by BAA. A little further on are Stonyfield, Pennyfields and Foxholes – just within the current BAA “buy and bulldoze” scheme and now bought up by the airport developer. The next house is Furrows which comes under the Home Owner Support Scheme but none of the houses beyond in this road are covered by any scheme so the occupants anxiously watch and wait, unable to sell houses which were once so desirable they were snapped up on the rare occasions they came up for sale. The pressure from the blight is immense.

Jane Howson, resident of Furrows, Great Easton, writes:

- 5.10.2 The homes in our village are divided by many schemes. Some are in the Home Value Guarantee Scheme. We are in the Home Owner Support Scheme. Further neighbours are not covered by any scheme at all.
- 5.10.3 At the moment for us living with 23 million passengers using Stansted each year is unbearable. The thought of 25 million a nightmare. Enjoying the garden is already impossible. Large low flying planes passing incessantly overhead render conversation impossible. In the kitchen the china and glass shakes in the cupboard. At night there is no reprieve. Not only do we have the noise and smell of fuel but we suffer the continuous light pollution and traffic noise from an airport that never sleeps. For us now, there is no night sky and we see no stars.

Jackie Deane, resident of Great Easton, writes:

- 5.10.4 Over the past four years the parish of Great Easton has suffered further from the increase in airport capacity and the continued uncertainty over the airport's future growth. When the wind direction changes and we are overflown we cannot escape the intrusion and impact on our quality of life. We tend to be more affected during good weather when normal people prefer to have windows open and spend more time outdoors. We, however, try to keep our windows closed as much as possible to block out the worst of the noise. We try to spend as much time as we can away from home as the constant noise disturbance is distressing.
- 5.10.5 Night flights have becoming increasingly disturbing to us and we have become used to the noise to a certain extent. If we have anyone to stay at our home they find the night disturbance alarming. Similarly, it is embarrassing to invite people over in the summer for a barbeque so we haven't invited anyone this year.
- 5.10.6 My 11 year old son now requires an inhaler during the summer months. He doesn't normally suffer from asthma but the GP told us that more and more people are requiring them during the summer to counter the poor air quality.
- 5.10.7 Very few houses have sold in Great Easton since the 2002 Air Transport White Paper consultation. Plans for the A120/M11 link road have recently been abandoned and this has led to a partial lifting of the blight on our property prices but the houses remain unsold. I know that several householders in the village had planned to sell four years ago and have given up hope altogether now.
- 5.10.8 I had my house valued recently. Its value is lower than it would have been if we were in Great Dunmow, for example, but so few houses have sold it is difficult to put a value on it. The estate agent considers that it would be good for us if Ryanair influences the decision on another runway as it would then be in or very close to the existing runway taking the problem slightly further away. But that would not remove the problem, simply shift it to another set of people.
- 5.10.9 There is much to consider before I would be convinced putting my house on the market could result in a sale. There are already two houses up for sale in Brocks Mead alone, with another standing empty. In any case, I wouldn't like to show anyone around my house at the moment as the aircraft disturbance is particularly severe. It would deter most prospective buyers but we, living here, are expected to ignore it.

5.11 Tilty

- 5.11.1 Tilty is the site of a Cistercian abbey founded in 1153 and one of only three in Essex. Only one section of the cloister wall remains to mark the site of the Abbey, but the lovely 'Chapel at the Gate' still towers over the fields and is now the parish church. Its famous East window, with its wonderful tracery, has a magical quality when lit up at night, making the church visible for miles. Some of the views in Tilty have been described as the prettiest in Essex.
- 5.11.2 The threat of expansion – notably plans for a second runway – have, however, had a major impact on the village and fears for the future. Of the 30 or so properties in Tilty, only around seven are included within the Home Owner Support Scheme, with the remainder left hanging in limbo.

David and Kay Johnson, residents of Tilty, write:

- 5.11.3 Some five years ago The Times newspaper ran an article which described Uttlesford as the most ideal district in which to live. The district was considered to be the perfect area for a peaceful and pleasant lifestyle. Typically many people were attracted to the area from places such as north and east London, including us.
- 5.11.4 However, to the north east of the airport in Tilty where we live we are now seeing the break-up of communities which started in Molehill Green, on to Broxted and now to Great Easton and Duton Hill where many properties are up for sale. Where next - Lindsell, Thaxted and further on?
- 5.11.5 Once properties are acquired by BAA, beautiful houses are let to people who have no particular interest or links to the area or affection for the homes that they are living in. Gradually the properties start to deteriorate.
- 5.11.6 Some people have been living with the threat of airport expansion for nearly 30 years yet despite the stress and disruption caused to them they have continued to be loyal contributors to the wellbeing of the area. They deserve to have the threat removed once and for all.
- 5.11.7 Small country roads are being exploited as rat runs to the airport and indeed many are being clogged up with cars parked there illegally to avoid the extortionate charges at the airport.
- 5.11.8 In the real world, far removed from BAA's 'averaged noise maps' are real people who are awoken every morning around 6am when the first of many flights take off. And during the night more and more flights seem to be taking off thus further disturbing our sleep. There are greater numbers of larger aircraft now using Stansted than ever and still they say they want more. There is an obvious consequence to all this which does not bear thinking about.

5.12 Duton Hill

- 5.12.1 The people of Duton Hill are also experiencing great anxiety. Many of their homes now come under the Home Owner Support Scheme which has resulted in a great number being put on the market simultaneously to ensure people keep their options open with regard to take up of the scheme. The worry is that if the homes are all sold back to BAA (there is no interest in them from any other purchaser) this close knit community will suffer the same fate as places like Molehill Green, Bambers Green and Broxted if and when BAA acquire the properties, when they will be allowed to decline as a result of being left empty or put out to short term let.

John Lewis, resident of Duton Hill, writes:

- 5.12.2 I have been a resident in this village for over 30 years – a village that is positioned in one of the most beautiful parts of the country and which, because of airport expansion, is suffering severe blight. Worse still, Duton Hill has been split with the introduction of the Home Owner Support Scheme for some – but not for all. Part of the village is within the scheme and part is outside.
- 5.12.3 Currently there are 13 houses up for sale within the HOSS scheme and certain of these properties have been on the market for a considerable time. One estate

agent reports that there has been virtually no interest from prospective purchasers and that they've had only one viewing. Inevitably these properties will be bought by BAA and will, in all probability, be rented out and not actually sold back to a private purchaser.

- 5.12.4 The result will be rental tenants with no real interest in the properties which will fall into certain disrepair. The gardens will become overgrown and the general appearance will be 'tatty'. This scenario is already evident in other neighbouring villages such as Broxted where BAA has purchased a large number of houses.
- 5.12.5 The other effect will be that the village community will be lost. The rental tenants will have no real interest in the community and village life. They will in all probability be in the area for a short time and therefore a considerable number of residents will be regarded as transient.

5.13 Little Easton

Annie Tooth, resident of Little Easton, writes:

- 5.13.1 The airport has such a massive impact on all our lives. We are trying to live with it but how much more can we all take? The things I hate most are seeing a community disappear before my eyes, problems with multiple occupancy when properties are rented out, neglect of the area.
- 5.13.2 We live with terrible plane noise. One of my many concerns is being totally drowned out by airport noise in church. The Rector has to stop as she can't be heard in Tilty or Broxted. Imagine what it's like for the mourners when she is taking a funeral. It can only get worse. Are all the churches going to be double glazed? This is at just short of 25 million passengers. What of the future?
- 5.13.3 I hate driving around the lanes with Checker taxis from the airport fixed to my bumper, ready to push me into the verges and hedges as they pass.

The Reverend Gillian Greenslade, responsible for Five Parishes of Great Easton, Broxted, Tilty, Chickney and Little Easton, writes:

- 5.13.4 I am sure that those in my community will give good view regarding what life is like for us living close to Stansted Airport.
- 5.13.5 As far as the existing runway increase goes I have always emphasised the village nature of Broxted Church and churchyard. The church is open during the day and is much used, not just for Sunday services. I am concerned by the fragmentation of Broxted and Tilty as people move away. Community feeling takes a long time to build but is easily destroyed.
- 5.13.6 Increased use of the current runway will affect all the villages in my area with greater noise and increase in traffic to name but two reasons.

5.14 Pledgdon Green

- 5.14.1 As in many other communities, there is no protection from blight for the people of Pledgdon Green and many have suffered from the talk of a possible link road to the airport since proposals for expansion were first mooted in 2002 in the consultation for the White Paper. The road development threat has only recently

been lifted. However, the very real impacts of life close to Stansted Airport continue to make themselves felt on a daily basis. Aircraft noise is a major concern – indoors and out. So too is walking along the narrow lanes – especially when traffic can't be heard because of overflying planes.

Laurie Traquair of Squirrels, Pledgdon Green writes:

- 5.14.2 I have lived here with my husband and two daughters for the last six years. We came from busy London to find peace and tranquillity and to follow a dream of once again owning horses. We were able to find a property that fitted the bill in terms of equestrian facilities and myself and my two young daughters started to show and compete locally with our horses.
- 5.14.3 Once permission for expanding Stansted to 25 million passengers was agreed just about everything changed in the village of Broxton.
- 5.14.4 It is true to say that planes fly extremely low over our property coming in to land and taking off. It never seemed to be that much of an issue until recently when now they pass over every one or two minutes at peak times which are getting longer. There has been a massive increase lately and I spend a lot of time outside with my horses unable to concentrate on training properly and making the horses aware of my commands. Therefore this property is no longer a place suitable for keeping horses.
- 5.14.5 We have an airport related industrial estate down the lane from our home. Large lorries and vans pass constantly up and down the tiny, narrow road. We have problems with airport car parking which brings cars into our village and also airport cabs which pick up and cut through the village at all times of the day and night.
- 5.14.6 Horses are sensitive souls. Loud sudden noise freaks them out. They don't like it. I worry about going out on rides with my children that the vehicles now filling our roads will come flying around a corner before the safety of our bridle paths has been reached.
- 5.14.7 Some of my neighbours and friends began moving away with the offer of the buy back scheme to those living in homes on the site of proposed second runway. Today, parts of the area then seemed to have completely lost all its life. No more can I go out for a ride and chat to almost everyone on the way. So many places are now empty or known only by the cars that are parked outside, rather than their current, rented occupants who are never to be seen.
- 5.14.8 To try and sell our home at this point would be useless. Who would buy a property like ours for enough money to enable us to be able to start again somewhere else? The anxiety and worry is great. Uncertainty is the worst thing of all.

5.15 Henham

Gerry Bigland, resident of Henham, writes:

- 5.15.1 This may be a familiar story to many residents who have seen changes in Henham over the years but what we are now experiencing is not just change for the sake of progress but for pure profit at the expense of the community from the airport and property developers who have yet to prove that expansion is justified for the good of all.

- 5.15.2 Our lovely village of Henham is more and more being taken for granted by many as a nice place to live being convenient for work and travel links with no thought for how it became such an attractive proposition and how it has to be continuously maintained.
- 5.15.3 Over the 11 years I have lived here the number of community volunteers who support the various organisations is diminishing fast. I accept every generation may voice similar concerns but this is happening very fast and can only be associated with the similar speed of growth seen at the airport. The expression “use it or lose it” comes to mind.
- 5.15.4 Continued vigilance from concerned residents is being constantly challenged by numerous planning applications from developers to build large houses on the village boundaries on agricultural land and even a motel in place of our public house. While accepting the need for affordable homes, especially for youngsters wanting to stay in the community they were brought up in, I can see no movement in this direction, only from speculators out to make a quick buck on the back of unnecessary airport expansion.
- 5.15.5 Should any expansion of the airport be allowed I feel this will open the floodgates for development on an unprecedented scale destroying communities like mine almost overnight. Unless we continue to be vigilant and protest, what village and community will be safe from liquidation?

5.16 Burton End

Michael Belcher, resident of Burton End, writes:

- 5.16.1 Since BAA published their Generation 2 document last December [2005] a cloud has hung over Burton End. This small hamlet which sits alongside the north west boundary of Stansted Airport has been blighted by BAA’s proposals to build the biggest car park on the planet. Their plans threaten to pour concrete over green fields and woods as well as the destruction of a number of properties in Burton End (many Grade II listed), including The Ash public house, with the consequent loss of an entire community. The current planning application to expand the airport on a single runway by removing the limit on passenger numbers is seen merely as a prelude to next year’s promised application by new owners ADI for a second runway. If our local council gives in to BAA’s current requests, it will have a hard job declining the next approach and so will, in effect, be sacrificing the community that is Burton End.
- 5.16.2 The overwhelming majority of residents of Burton End voted unanimously at a public meeting in January to oppose the Generation 2 proposals and any further expansion of the airport. Far from fracturing the community, the threat from the airport has brought the hamlet together in a hitherto unprecedented manner. Residents have demonstrated a determination to carry on as normally as possible in spite of the blight that has been inflicted which affects not only properties but also lives. Passing through Burton End it is clear that the properties, gardens and boundaries are being well maintained and that the residents take pride in and care for their surroundings and the environment. This is proof that people believe it is still possible to enjoy a good quality of life living next door to the airport at its current size.
- 5.16.3 We hope that members of Uttlesford District Council, who have the unenviable responsibility of determining this planning application, will come to Burton End to

see and hear for themselves what is at stake and get a feeling for the sense of community which risks being lost for ever. They will be able to contrast what they find here with the atmosphere of neglect and dilapidation which is sadly all too apparent when passing through some of the less fortunate villages adjacent to the airport, where established residents have given way to a more transient population, and the sense of community has been irreversibly eroded. They will also be better able to reflect on the often overlooked economic and social disadvantages of having a major international airport on the doorstep which offset the much vaunted and, frankly, over-hyped benefits to the local economy.

5.17 Birchanger

Pim Godwin, resident of Birchanger Village, writes:

- 5.17.1 Birchanger Village lies to the south west boundary of the airport. The houses in the village are centred along a mile of the centre of Birchanger Lane, with developments to either side of the lane. There are very different effects from the airport at either end of the lane, but the issue of blight affects everyone.
- 5.17.2 Birchanger used to be a village where families lived their whole lives, counting back to several generations. There was a good sense of community, a thriving village club, British Legion, cricket and football teams to name a few of the elements of Birchanger village life. These organisations are still there, but they are diminishing as long term Birchanger residents are beginning to wonder if Birchanger is the right place to bring up their children or to end their days, and key people depart.
- 5.17.3 Duck End which is on the southern end of the lane is the worst sufferer from noise and pollution. It is also the nearest part of the village to junction 8 and the motorway. It has proved very difficult to sell property there, but the issue of blight affects the entire village. There are many properties which have failed to sell or been made available for multi-occupational lettings, which as experienced throughout the area around the airport, bring issues of temporary residents, multiple car parking and a lack of care for the community. Helicopters bring noise directly overhead at any hour of the day or night and gridlock around the roundabout as peak hour traffic builds up. There is no scheme for compensation and the sound insulation scheme, where applicable, is derisory. At night the sky is an orange glow with the bright lights of the airport, while by day the airport car parks gleam with the light from thousands of parked cars.
- 5.17.4 People still feel very strongly about the village. Many really do not want to leave, and will think very hard before they do, but the noise through the night gets worse, the shoulder periods become busier and a good night's sleep becomes just a memory for a steadily increasing number of residents.

5.18 Stansted Mountfitchet

Ray Woodcock, resident of Stansted Mountfitchet, writes:

- 5.18.1 Destruction of a community is almost unimaginable until it happens. Even now, it does not seem that it is actually happening. But we only have to look to Bambers Green or Broxted, for example, to see that because of airport expansion proposals, it is taking place rapidly.

- 5.18.2 In my village of Stansted Mountfitchet there are only small signs of change, but they are there nevertheless. One of them is the rapidly increasing number of foreign workers renting low cost properties.
- 5.18.3 I have lived here in Stansted now for 30 years. I came here to live in a tranquil area away from the hustle and bustle and where there is beautiful countryside to enjoy. It was super and satisfied my family and me so much that my daughter and son in law still live in the village and are bringing up their sons here. But undesirable change is happening and if the airport continues to expand rapidly my fear is that it will lose its identify very quickly. Already so many people say that it has changed since UDC approved the expansion from 15mppa to 25mppa.
- 5.18.4 With hindsight, people will ask “why didn’t anyone do anything about it?” But by then it will be too late. Communities take a long time to develop and establish themselves.

5.19 Manuden

Melissa Cowley, resident of Manuden, writes:

- 5.19.1 On Sunday evening, for some reason, the airport was completely quiet. There was no background noise from planes taking off, and no noise from planes flying overhead. It was a beautiful, warm, still summer evening and we were able to sit outside in total silence.
- 5.19.2 I have lived in this area for most of my 40 years and in those few quiet moments I remembered what life used to be like here – the tranquillity of the rural life that we used to experience.
- 5.19.3 Today it is back to business as usual. The sun is shining and it is a lovely summer day which means that we are being flown over as planes approach the airport. Despite the fact that there are no set routes for approach we will be flown over roughly every two minutes or so at peak times and every five minutes or so for the rest of the day. Some planes fly right over our house, some are to the side, some are more noisy than others – but we notice each and every one of them.
- 5.19.4 I was driving to Stansted recently and counted eight planes in the sky at the same time. The fact is that for residents living around the airport it feels as though they are a constant presence – that there is absolutely no break from it.
- 5.19.5 The place that most epitomises these changes for me is Hatfield Forest. In my childhood this was a favourite haunt and we visited it frequently. Today, I hardly ever take my children there because its beauty has been absolutely undermined by the constant noise from aircraft. In addition, as a parent one cannot help wondering how being in such close proximity to aircraft emissions must be affecting the health of our children.
- 5.19.6 For those of us living around the airport it is not only noise that has had an impact on us. Traffic in the area has also become intolerable. A drive to Standon through the Hadham lights recently took almost three quarters of an hour when it should have taken no more than 20 minutes. Bishop Stortford has become such a nightmare to visit that I avoid it whenever possible.

- 5.19.7 Because of these impacts people in our village are moving to other locations. In their place come new people who do not know how it used to be, who accept the noise and other impacts as being normal and who frequently care less about our local environment. So there is more apathy towards development and therefore more development takes place. Many of the villages around here (such as Clavering and Rickling) have seen substantial new building development in recent months and Manuden itself is now being targeted by developers.
- 5.19.8 My own family is fortunate in some ways. My husband is home-based so we can in theory move wherever we want to. But the trouble is we don't want to. I was brought up here. My brother and sister both live within three miles of us with their children and my parents are next door. I have friends here that I have grown up with. My children attend the same school that I went to.
- 5.19.9 At the same time, however, it is breaking my heart to see our beautiful countryside being despoiled forever simply because people want to fly to Malaga for less than it costs to take the train to London. So I don't know what we will end up doing – where we will end up living – and there are many other people in the village who share my uncertainty about their future.
- 5.19.10 There is absolutely no doubt that our countryside and our way and quality of life is under siege at the moment, because of BAA's ruthless determination to expand, whatever the cost. This is why we are so resolute in fighting it to the bitter end.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 The impacts of current airport operation are already taking a heavy toll on people's wellbeing and community cohesion. To allow further expansion would make life intolerable for many local people across a wide catchment, extending well beyond the immediate vicinity of the airport and long term would have a deleterious effect on the fabric of the community.
- 6.1.2 To overturn the Inspector's recommendation following the 1981-83 Public Inquiry into Stansted expansion of a maximum passenger throughput of 25 million passengers per annum – unequivocally accepted by the Government – would be a travesty for those who have settled in this community on the fully justifiable understanding that there was a finite limit in place, endorsed by the Government, on the scale of the intrusion they would face from Stansted Airport's operations.
- 6.1.3 The sacrifice of the community and the social costs arising from further expansion at Stansted cannot be warranted on the basis of providing more cheap flights for holidaymakers.

ANNEX 1: PRESENTATION BY IRENE JONES TO UDC 5 July 2006

I am addressing you as an individual member of the public and representing my family. I live at Peacocks which is part of The Maltings, Broxted and which is 4 kilometers from the end of the runway to the north-east of Stansted Airport.

I would like to show you something. (Show poster of Public Meeting dated 1964).

We found this in our out-buildings round about 1979/1980. Our find had pertinent relevance at that time because we had just been thrown into the maelstrom of having to cope with another proposed expansion of the airport.

When we moved into Peacocks in 1977 we knew there was an airport close by. We knew there had been an application for a large expansion in the past but that it had been rejected save for a small concession for growth. (Doesn't that sound familiar?) When we arrived in Broxted there was a throughput of 250,000 ppa, with permission to grow to 2mppa. We were very naïve in assuming that this was the end of the matter.

So when, in 1978 plans were put forward for further expansion of airport capacity in the south-east, we were very worried and upset. When Stansted was chosen to take this increased capacity we were angry and felt betrayed.

This was the beginning, for us, of the constant battle to make ourselves heard. The frustration of feeling we didn't count. Our quality of life was under threat and so was the beautiful countryside we had chosen to live in. I became very involved with NWHEPA, the Stop Stansted Expansion of that time. I gave evidence at the Public Inquiry. (Show copy of evidence). This is my statement, dated March 1982

Let me read a little of it to you. I outlined my upbringing in an urban environment and my longing to live in the country. I go on...

"It took many years to finally achieve a rural life style. Now that I do live in the country, I have found many bonuses that I had not anticipated.

People care about one another. There is always time to exchange a greeting. No old person goes lonely or uncared for. A walk in the churchyard is not an unpleasant experience. There is a sense of security and continuity. The spirit of those buried there is still alive in the families and activities that go on in the village.

The quiet is tangible. Walking the lanes at night, I can sense the crops growing. You can hear the stream running its course a quarter of a mile away. The air is so clear that at night you can often see the Milky Way in detail.

It is very exciting to watch a thunderstorm pass across the horizon. You can understand that the light travels faster than sound.

Any weather is an experience if you live in the country. You can enjoy the wind, the mist, the rain, the snow, as well as the sunshine, because the weather is part of the environment as well as being a crucial factor to the farmer and his crops."

How have things changed since I made this statement?

There is no longer uninterrupted peace and quiet. "Tranquility" is the word used today. I realise how much we have lost because last Christmas Day, for a couple of hours in the afternoon, someone switched Stansted off! I took my dog along the lane opposite my house and realised I could hear the stream flowing. There had been a few flights, but the background noise had gone. I felt quite bitter, (not a feeling for Christmas Day), knowing that that silence would probably be the last I enjoyed, knowing that permission had been granted to increase the numbers beyond what was in place on that day.

I was astonished to hear at one of the meetings recently that a Health Impact Assessment is not a mandatory requirement of a planning application. Noise is NOT an 'annoyance' as suggested by BAA in their HIA. It has adverse health implications. It is very distressing. It has taken me twice as long to compose this presentation as it should because I have had to cope with the noise of overflying aircraft. If my home were a place of employment, the Health and Safety Executive would prosecute me.

Another change is the loss of the bright starry sky. A previous Managing Director of the airport referred to it as "a rosy glow" when I said I regretted the loss of starlight. He failed to understand that his "rosy glow" had destroyed something special.

The natural environment is very precious to me. The countryside is being eroded by construction and development and by pollution. Those promoting airport growth insist they are doing their best to mitigate against damage to the environment. But it is only a tick list...keep traffic off this road: save that tree; attend another meeting, say the right words, then apply for more parking space, 'oh, don't worry, we'll move that meadow'. It doesn't work like that. The countryside is an organism. Its integrity must be protected.

The most recent change is the way our community is being destroyed. Some people have had to move away. I don't blame them. Life must go on. But sadly, in order to do so they have had to sell, to BAA, who see property, not homes. Some houses are simply boarded up. Others are being let, unfortunately not to new families but to passing strangers. No one cares for the gardens or the upkeep of the buildings. No one stays long enough to care.

I started my presentation with my poster, 1964. Major development was averted. In 1982, following the Public Inquiry, we managed to hold growth back to 8mppa, (the airport had asked for 2 runways and 50mppa). A few years later and nod of the head in the House of Commons and we had 15mppa. The rules were changed. We had expected another public inquiry for permission to go to 25mppa, but the Government decided to use local planning laws and avoid the cost in time and money of a public inquiry. I attended those hearings and pleaded that you refuse permission. We know the outcome.

So, why are we still here? We are asking you to keep the cap on growth because, if you don't the airport will achieve what it wanted in the first place. I will have given half my life trying to stop what is, already, a catastrophe. No perceived economic benefit to a wider community can compensate me, my family or my neighbours for the misery we live through now. A misery made worse by believing no one is listening, no one cares. I can't even complain about low flying, noisy planes. I am under the flight path, being so close to the runway, they are over my head, they are not 'off swathe'. My complaints are invalid.

I have heard enough evidence at these meetings to be sure that there are sound reasons for you to reject this application. I ask that your Officers advise you wisely. I beg you, give me something to look forward to.

ANNEX 2: PRESENTATION BY MAGGIE SUTTON TO UDC 5 July 2006

I will leave it to the experts among us to continue to highlight the reasons why further expansion of Stansted Airport both nationally and locally is totally unacceptable.

I want for just a few moments to reflect on my own very personal view. I am very aware that the issue affects people living a lot further away already. I want people to listen to this and realise my story could one day be similar to theirs.

Eleven years ago my husband and five small children came to live in the village of Broxted. We had lived on the outskirts of London in a semi detached home in a very urban environment. We wanted, for our children, the experience of the space, appreciation of the outstanding natural beauty, the benefit of small schools, short waiting lists and no queues.

We got all that and much more. We discovered people generally had much more time for us in school, at the shops, in our village and beyond. We made fantastic friends and neighbours.

But for the impact the airport has brought to our family over the last four years, our children have had the opportunity of a most wonderful childhood living here in Uttlesford which will hopefully serve them for the rest of their lives. Expansion plans bring the promise of a great many changes. What of the children still to come? Will they be afforded the same benefits or will the impacts THEY receive be too great?

Our new home was now a listed period cottage in a few acres of land which enabled us to acquire sheep, ducks, chickens and rabbits as pets.

We believed we had found a most charmed life.

We were aware that we were moving near to an airport but at that time it served a fraction of the people it does today and in those days we hardly noticed a plane. We had absolutely no idea of the threat and anxiety we would one day suffer. One which would continue for many years to come.

Our lives started to fall apart at the announcement of approval for expansion of Stansted to 25 million passengers per year. Our neighbours started to become an ever growing, greedy, noisy, out of control monster from that time forward.

At the time of the White Paper announcement we were to learn that THAT neighbour, THAT monster, wanted our home as well. Our home, those views, our community – all now under threat.

These days, in the summer months, with the wind in a certain direction, planes take off over Broxted and our lives become a living hell.

Over the last three weeks when the weather has been so wonderful the planes have been taking off overhead. With the need to open windows and the airport at its busiest time the noise has been absolutely intense.

The airport actually springs to life at 5am each morning with the start of excessive ground noise followed shortly by a never ending line of loud roaring planes. From that moment onward it is impossible to sleep.

This goes on all day and even as night falls the airport continues to hum in the background as we fall asleep.

We never get complete, unbroken sleep during the night. There are always, during the very early hours of the morning, several large and noisy planes ready to wake us from that sleep.

We suffer greatly from airport related traffic through our villages day and night. There is much to be done to address this – not least operating traffic calming measures since a great many accidents occur on our tiny lanes.

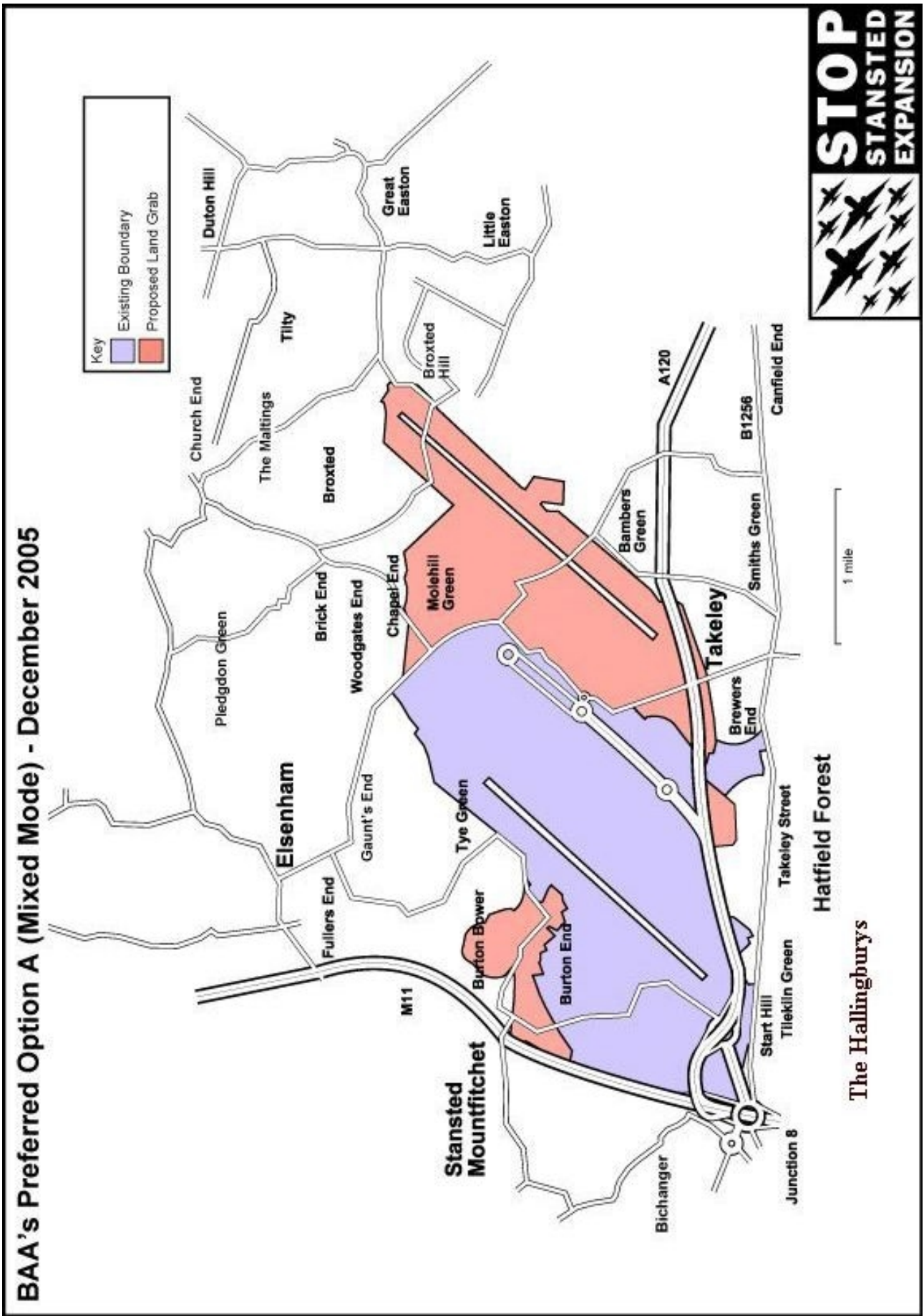
Fly parking is much worse than UDC can ever imagine. People park at private local addresses, in local roads, in fields, and in a great many public house car parks. This brings traffic to our region which goes on from early morning until late at night.

Our lanes are constantly used by speeding airport cabs cutting through the villages.

Small industrial airport related units are springing up in our villages. Large haulage lorries often find their way onto our tiny lanes taking trees and overhead cables with them sometimes as they pass leaving broken road signs and corroded verges in their wake.

The community we loved has been torn apart. People who can escape WILL escape.

Or is there really any escape from what has already been put in place?



ANNEX 3

Appeal by BAA Ltd and Stansted Airport Ltd following the refusal by Uttlesford District Council of planning application UTT/0717/06/FUL

Community Cohesion
(Erosion of the Community)
Appendices

Appendix 1 **Webcast presentations to Uttlesford District Council,**
5 and 6 July 2006