



www.stopstanstedexpansion.com
info@stopstanstedexpansion.com

PO Box 311
Takeley
Bishops Stortford
Herts CM22 6PY
Tel: 01279 870558
Fax: 01279 870786

26 May 2009
by post and email

The Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP
Secretary of State
Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Dear Secretary of State

Stansted G2 Public Inquiry

Please refer to BAA's letter to you of 20 May, which was copied to SSE, and to our letters to you of 5 February and 1 March and to your open letters of 2 March and 15 April, all relating to the start date for the Stansted G2 Public Inquiry. I would also refer you to the letter sent to you by Mr Ketteridge on behalf of the Councils on 15 April 2009, and I am attaching the subsequent correspondence between myself and BAA's Chief Executive, Colin Matthews.

You will see from this correspondence that both the Councils and SSE have asked BAA to withdraw its application for a second runway at Stansted. Many powerful grounds have been adduced to support this request, including the uncertainty about future ownership. Instead of withdrawing its application, however, BAA has asked you to suspend the planning process 'until such time as there is clarity about the future ownership of the Stansted Airport'.

It would seem that you have two main alternatives open to you, neither of which is acceptable to SSE.

The first is to refuse BAA's request and to insist that the Public Inquiry should begin later this year. We are more than ever resolved to fight BAA's application and are increasingly confident of success. But a Public Inquiry of this magnitude would place an appalling strain on our energy and resources, and on those of the local authorities and the local community in general. Such an Inquiry should be undertaken only if it is appropriate and necessary. In this case, for all the reasons we have put forward, it is not. It may also be the case that, even though a Public Inquiry has been started, BAA would withdraw its application part way through the process.

The second is to grant BAA's request and to allow a postponement. This, however, could lead to intolerable delays. If BAA's appeal against CAT's ruling is rejected, it may take its case to the Court of Appeal and then to the House of Lords. It is now almost seven years since the threat of major expansion at Stansted was raised by the Government, and it would be wholly unreasonable to subject the local community to a further undefined period of blight and uncertainty. This applies particularly to those families and businesses who are threatened by compulsory purchase, inhibiting major decisions such as whether to move home and which school to choose for their children or, in the cases of businesses, whether to continue to recruit and invest. Our preliminary view is that it would be contrary to Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights if the threat of compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) was allowed to hang over the local community indefinitely.

In these circumstances it seems utterly irresponsible for BAA either to continue with its application immediately or to ask for its consideration to be postponed. Therefore it would appear to us that the only fair and rational decision open to you is to terminate the G2 planning process by default.

Yours sincerely



Peter Sanders
Chairman

Encs

cc The Rt Hon Geoff Hoon MP, Secretary of State for Transport
Carmel Edwards, G2 Inquiry Manager, Planning Inspectorate
Christopher Clarke, Deputy Chairman, Competition Commission
Alastair McDermid, Planning Director, BAA
Steve Bailes, Hertfordshire County Council
David Dash, Essex County Council
Roger Harborough, Uttlesford District Council
Peter Fitzpatrick, Nabarro LLP (for the SACC)