

## Major expansion at Leeds Bradford gets the go-ahead

Faced with the strong determination by the officers of Leeds City Council to see the planning application providing for a potential expansion to 5mppa by 2012 (from 2.8 million in 2008) approved, the Councillors on the Planning Committee eventually gave their consent on 23<sup>rd</sup> July after another 4½ hour meeting, but only on the casting vote of the chair!



This was followed the very next day by the leading low-cost airline at the airport, jet2, coming out [in opposition](#) to the proposals ("All airports are seeing a reduction in passenger numbers and I would question whether we need this extension now") for many of the same reasons identified by the anti expansion campaign ("The ring road is already crowded and there are not enough bus

services to and from the airport")! And then on 11th August by Ryanair [announcing](#) their own plans for very significant growth – 1 million additional passengers a year and 14 new leisure routes - starting in March 2010. So clearly the disagreements between airports and airlines, and between the low-cost operators themselves, which have previously characterised the situation in the SE (principally at Stansted) have now spread further North as the recession bites.

But that's not the end of the matter. In order to overcome the entirely justified concerns of councillors that the inadequate local road network will not be able to cope with this scale of expansion, the officers have had to devise an extraordinarily complex mechanism for future payments by the airport to support improved public transport – which almost certainly will not work – which has yet to be approved (to be considered on 2nd September). The anti-expansion campaign will be scrutinising this in great detail to see if a further challenge can be made. (Anthony Rae)

## Leeds Bradford Airport expansion plans approved



Greenpeace

24th July 2009 Plans to extend Leeds Bradford, which would double its capacity in 5 years, have been backed by Leeds councillors. The proposals include a £28m extension to the terminal building, a new departure lounge etc. In April the council rejected an original plan due to concerns over the impact on roads around the airport. Projections show the airport's expansion plans mean it would consume all Leeds' carbon budget by 2050. 80% of letters to Leeds City council were against the expansion. [Link](#).

## Ryanair claims jobs boost from its new Leeds Bradford Airport base

Ryanair is to set up a base at Leeds Bradford, allegedly creating hundreds of jobs. O'Leary said the announcement would have a "significant impact" on the Yorkshire region - and sustain 1,000 jobs. It will offer 14 new routes and 63 weekly return flights to and from Leeds Bradford in an investment of over £84m in the airport. Two aircraft will be based at the airport, which will become the airline's 34th base. The new routes will take Ryanair's total number of destinations from Leeds Bradford to 17.

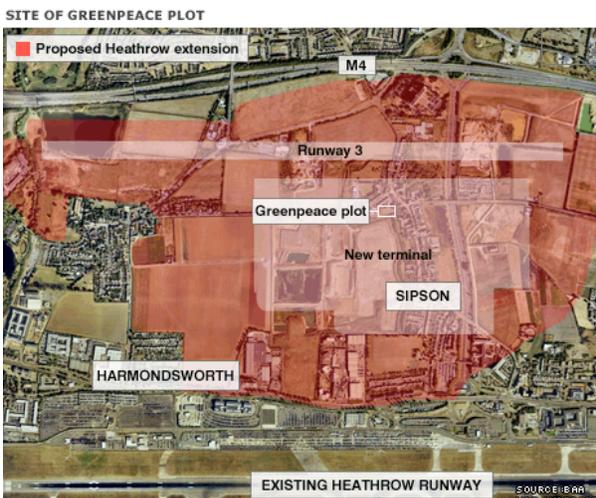
The airline expects the new flights to result in one million more passengers passing through the airport each year. The 14 new routes will fly from Leeds Bradford to: Carcassonne, Limoges, Montpellier and Nantes, Malaga and Murcia, Pisa and Venice Treviso, Faro, Ibiza, Knock, Krakow, Malta and Palma. Ryanair says there will not be night flights. The mantra "1,000 jobs per million passengers" has been trotted out repeatedly by airlines and airports for the last 10 years. The actual number of jobs created, especially by the low cost airlines, is far less than that. The true figure could be 650 jobs per million passengers, for a full service airline. For low cost airlines in the past, the figure may be nearer 500 jobs per million passengers. Ryanair is cutting jobs hugely, by having online booking and reduced baggage handling, so a figure of more like 350 jobs per million is more likely - based on evidence from other UK airports.

More info from *No Leeds Bradford Airport Expansion* at:  
<http://www.leedstidal.org/nolbaexpansion/council-approves-lba-expansion>

For more on jobs and airports, see AEF's report "*Airport Jobs: false hopes, cruel hoax*" (March 2009)  
 The report and executive summary are at: "*Airport Jobs: false hopes, cruel hoax*"

## Heathrow Campaigners Granted Court Hearing over Third Runway Decision

6th August. Campaigners against the third runway at Heathrow have been granted a hearing in the High Court to rule on the campaigners' complaints about flaws in the process that lead to the announcement in



January by Geoff Hoon, then Secretary of State for Transport, giving permission to BAA to draw up plans for the third runway. In doing so the Judge recognised the "significant public interest element to the case" as well as the need for "clarification" of the Transport Secretary's statement to Parliament in January giving the green light to expansion. The Court has gone for a "rolled up" hearing. It is a rather strange beast where they both decide whether to give permission and hear the key issues at the same time! They have gone for this is that the court at this stage may not be convinced that objectors' case merits a full hearing but they do feel that there are points which the Department for Transport have not satisfactorily dealt with. The case is expected to be heard in late October/early November. It is

being brought by the 2M group of local authorities HACAN, NoTRAG, Greenpeace and WWF with the support of other organisation such as CPRE. (John Stewart)

## Government unveils high-speed rail plan to ground short flights

5th August. The government has made the demise of domestic air travel an explicit policy target for the first time by aiming to replace short-haul flights with a new 250mph high-speed rail network. The transport secretary, Lord Adonis, said switching the current 46 million domestic air passengers a year to a multibillion-pound north-south rail line was "manifestly in the public interest". Marking a government shift against aviation, Adonis added that rail journeys should be preferred to plane trips To get progressive replacement of short-haul aviation by rail, we need a high-speed rail system linking major cities, and accessible to Europe too. Lord Adonis said he hoped that all flights to Europe could eventually also be ended in favour of a better connected rail network. However, Adonis said a high-speed rail scheme would not undermine an aviation policy that calls for new runways at Stansted and Heathrow over the next decade. [Link](#)

## Lord Adonis Right on Rail but Wrong on Heathrow

Campaign group HACAN has welcomed the remarks by Transport Secretary Lord Adonis that the Government plans to eliminate domestic flights through investment in high-speed rail. But the campaign group argues that Adonis is wrong to suggest that a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway at Heathrow would still be needed in order to cater for an increase in long-haul flights.

HACAN Chair John Stewart said, "The evidence is clear that investment in affordable fast rail services would be a viable alternative for at least a fifth of all flights currently using Heathrow. That would free up enough landing space for an increase in long-haul flights without any need to build a new runway." HACAN produced research almost three years ago which showed that 100,000 flights out over just over 470,000 were to just twelve destinations where high-speed could be a viable rail alternative. [Short-Haul Flights: Clogging up Heathrow's Runways](#) (John Stewart)

## Heathrow campaigners picnic on Airplot - the site of the 3rd runway



21st July. A plot of land with over 45,000 "owners" near Heathrow Airport was the venue for a picnic organised by the No Third Runway Action Group (NoTRAG) as part of The Big Lunch initiative. The Airplot in Sipson was bought by Greenpeace, and now has over 45,000 beneficial owners, becoming a symbol of defiance, as well as an allotment and a small nature reserve. Even the blustery winds and light summer drizzle did not dampen the campaigners' spirits. Find out more about Airplot, and become a "beneficial owner" at <http://www.airplot.org.uk>

## Stop Stansted Expansion asks Benn for accurate noise information

11 August. SSE has called on the Secretary of State for the Environment, Hilary Benn, to intervene in BAA's draft Noise Action Plan consultation to ensure that correct figures are published which show the true extent of the noise impacts from Stansted Airport. SSE say this is essential to allow public consultation to be conducted on the basis of accurate and consistent data before the deadline for responses of 2 October.

SSE's analysis has found BAA's consultation misrepresents and understates the number of people affected by over-flying associated with the airport.

BAA's draft Noise Action Plan for Stansted claims to provide the results of noise mapping carried out in 2006 - but this is untrue. BAA has published lower figures for the numbers of people exposed to aircraft noise than the official figures published independently by the CAA, who carried out the 2006 noise mapping in accordance with the requirements of the EU Environmental Noise Directive (END).

BAA has provided noise data based on an entirely separate methodology, which does not comply with the END and could well result in the public being misled as to how much they are affected.

Reconciliation with the official CAA figures is impossible for 4 out of 5 sets of figures given by BAA in the draft Noise Action Plan. In the one case where it is possible to reconcile the two different sets of figures, BAA's figures significantly understate the number of people affected compared to the independent CAA figures.

This inconsistency is not specific to Stansted Airport. There are similar inconsistencies in BAA's draft Noise Action Plans for Heathrow and Gatwick Airports, which also understate the number of people affected by aircraft noise, compared to the official CAA data. Critically, BAA's error undermines the objective of the END which requires a common approach across EU Member States to measuring and then reducing the noise impacts of airports upon local communities.

Writing to Hilary Benn, the Government Minister responsible for implementing the END, SSE Chairman Peter Sanders said: "The misrepresentation and understatement of noise data in the Stansted draft Noise Action Plan is unacceptable and is another example of what can only be described as a casual approach towards implementation of the END by the Government and BAA alike."

SSE is nevertheless urging all members of the community affected by noise from over-flying to respond to BAA's consultation and has issued step-by-step guidance with an overview and background briefing to assist those without specialist knowledge of the issues. As well as being concerned about BAA's misrepresentation of the data, SSE considers the draft Noise Action Plan to be mostly a wish list rather than representing a meaningful plan to reduce Stansted's noise impacts.

SSE's guidance and information is available online at [www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/noise.html](http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/noise.html) (including the SSE letter to Hilary Benn) or on request from SSE's Campaign Office on 01279 870558.

### **SSE response to latest Ryanair cutbacks at Stansted, which are upsetting the second home owners**

21st July. Commenting on news of major cutbacks by Ryanair in its winter schedules for Stansted Airport, Stop Stansted Expansion's Economics Adviser Brian Ross said: "The idea that there is any need for a 2nd runway at Stansted is now simply pie in the sky. It is also clear that expansion plans have become a distraction for BAA management at Stansted at the expense of the underlying business." Ryanair accounts for 2/3 passengers using Stansted.

The Ryanair cuts will mean a 40% reduction in the number of aircraft it will base at Stansted this winter (compared with summer schedules), from 40 aircraft to 24. Ryanair says that this will result in a loss of 2.5m passengers at Stansted between October and March 2010. Thousands of second home owners face being cut off over the winter. 10 of Ryanair's routes will be cut, and frequency cuts on another 30. Services to Spain are likely to be safe because the Spanish Government has scrapped tourist taxes and the homes are still used fairly frequently during the winter. Some French flights may be cut. This is in part a bargaining ploy by Ryanair against airports.



### **London City Airport: East and North East London Group to Form**

As a result of the Public Meeting held in East London on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August a group of local residents, supported by HACAN and Fight the Flights, is likely to form to lobby MPs in the East of London about the increasing problem of aircraft noise in the area. If anybody is interested in getting involved, email John Stewart on: [johnstewart2@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart2@btconnect.com)

### **Campaigners launch legal challenge at London City Airport**

Fight the Flights will launch a legal challenge against controversial plans to increase the number of flights over east London from London City Airport. In early July many residents were outraged when Newham Council agreed to allow an extra 50,000 flights per year, bringing City's annual flight total to 120,000. This will lead to greater pollution and noise for people across a wide area, under the airport's flight-paths.

Legal advice obtained by Fight the Flights suggested there was a "very strong case" for a judicial review of Newham Council's decision. They are now appealing for funds from the public before they begin legal proceedings. FtF believes City Airport expansion has been the 'forgotten' expansion, despite it now being regarded as a major airport, and despite residents' best efforts. They are determined that residents have access to fairness and justice, and those living in the most affected areas are not denied a voice.

If you can donate to the FtF Legal Challenge Fund, details are at <http://londoncityairportfighttheflights.blogspot.com>

## **Launch of WWF's One in Five Challenge gets Tory support for fewer business flights**

WWF's One in Five Challenge was officially launched on 20 July 2009 and five founder members were announced: Capgemini, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), Marks & Spencer, Vodafone UK and Premiere Global Services.

The independently audited scheme encourages businesses to seek greener alternatives to flying, from video conferencing to train travel, sets yearly flight reduction targets and helps companies to get their staff engaged with the project. By providing a clear annual evaluation of the money and carbon saved by taking part in the One in Five Challenge, the programme also hopes to demonstrate that companies can

remain competitive while cutting their carbon emissions.



Theresa Villiers, Shadow Secretary for Transport, who was the keynote speaker at the launch, said: "If we are serious about tackling climate change, it is essential that businesses work together to start a dramatic shift to low-carbon travel, including more extensive use of realistic alternatives to flying. That is why I welcome WWF's ambitious One in Five Challenge, which

aims to do just that - challenge and support businesses in reducing the amount of flying they ask their staff to do and cutting their carbon impact on the planet."

Villiers also reiterated Tory opposition to Heathrow expansion and expressed a commitment to developing videoconferencing and high speed rail networks as alternatives. She is also keen to see Government leading by example to reduce their flying with plans to roll out more videoconferencing across Whitehall. The launch event also allowed delegates to take part in a telepresence session, linking with WWF Scotland and using Cisco equipment. Villiers had never seen telepresence before so was able to see that the latest videoconferencing technology really does replace the need to fly—often long haul—to company meetings. [WWF One in Five Challenge.](#) *(Jean Leston)*

## **The big whinge - the industry tries to fight back against Air Passenger Duty**

It has become clear over the last few weeks that the aviation industry and their friends, battered by the recession, increased oil prices and real doubts whether they will get any more runways, have begun to fight back. They have co-ordinated a campaign against the "unfairness" of Air Passenger Duty, particular in the way they claim it will make flying the preserve of the rich one again. They have argued that investment in alternative fuels such as biofuels will help deal with the emissions problems caused by aviation. In particular, they have concentrated their fire on Heathrow where they now understand that the biggest prize of all – a third runway – is slipping away from them. The British Chamber of Commerce published a report – paid for by the pro-expansion pressure group Future Heathrow – that a third runway would bring benefits to the national economy over £30 billion over 60 years. And BAA has announced plans for a sparkling new terminal to replace Terminal 2.

What the fight-back has revealed so far is the paucity of the industry's arguments. They skate over the fact that, even with the increase in APD, aviation remains hugely under-taxed. They fail to acknowledge the fact that extensive use of biofuels would be at the expense of land in poor countries needed for food or local biodiversity systems as forests are cut down. But it is perhaps with the Chamber of Commerce Report that the industry revealed just how desperate it is. The report did not factor in the environmental and social costs of a third runway: the cost of noise, pollution, climate change, community destruction, traffic congestion, thus making a mockery of its economic claims. When those costs are factored in, the economic benefit of a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway to the UK economy is, at most, £5 billion over 70 years. Even that figure is likely to be too high as it underestimates the cost of carbon.

But, although the industry's case for expansion is very poor, it can be expected to go for a big push in the autumn and perhaps especially at the Conservative Party Conference. This is something we need to counter.  
*(John Stewart)*

## Southend campaigners' fury over police photos

Campaigners have criticised police for taking their photos at Southend Airport. Members of Greenpeace Southend and the local opposition group, SAEN, were invited to talk with Liberal Democrat transport spokesman, MP Norman Baker, about the site plans in the airport's cafe, which is open to the public. Plans to extend the airport are up for consultation and Norman Baker wanted to hear views from protest groups. However, police officers with cameras took photographs during their meeting. One Greenpeace member said this made her feel uncomfortable and intimidated, and the taking of photos seemed inappropriate as this was merely a meeting with an MP and neither a protest or demonstration. Rochford chief inspector Andy Prophet claimed he had gained information prior to the meeting on July 8, that suggested people might disrupt the airport. He said that on the basis of that information, he allowed officers to use cameras - though agreeing the tactic is intrusive. He agreed that as there was no protest, the images obtained have been destroyed. Essex police said that both the taking of images and any subsequent retention of those images must be justified.



and inappropriately, here is a photo ...

Southend Council has indicated they are expecting the statutory consultation on the airport's expansion plans to emerge some time in September, with the Public Inquiry in the spring. There have already been two phases of consultation, which Southend Council describe as "informal". The statutory consultation prior to the Public Inquiry is the next phase. The Council have not published the results of the second phase yet, though the local group, SAEN, already have a good idea of the results, through counting responses through their campaigning, opposing the plans. <http://saen.org.uk/consultation-phase2>

Meanwhile, a local developer who is commissioned to build a new £9million hotel at Southend Airport has expressed frustration over massive delays on the project. Fratini Building Designers and Developers signed a provisional contract in March to build the 131-bedroom four-star hotel and it was due to get under way in May, but they have heard nothing for the past six weeks. They are reduced to venting their frustration in the local paper.

## SBAE monitoring shows Bristol airport planes often off track

7th August. A dramatic image released by the Stop Bristol Airport Expansion campaign (SBAE) shows just how many flights from Bristol International Airport are spreading out from standard flight paths. The image is a map of the Bristol, Bath and Chew Valley area on which flights departing from BIA are shown alongside the standard paths for BIA during one week from the 28th May. While some variations are allowed to the regular flight paths, their data illustrates just how wide an area flights from

BIA have covered. The campaigners say it is likely that planes travelling wide of their regular flight paths will become much more frequent if the airport is allowed to expand as it plans. The data confirms beyond a doubt just how far afield planes from Bristol airport are flying – not that this will come as any surprise to people living in those areas. Plans for 10 million passengers, and 13.8 million by 2030 can only mean that things are going to get much worse.



The data used to create SBAE's image was produced from a tracking device used by SBAE to monitor flights departing from Bristol airport during one week in May. The device, which cost the group less than £1000, consists of a box that picks up radio signals broadcast by planes, attached to a computer. The system, which has been used in Frankfurt, can be placed in different locations to pick up signals, and specially designed software is used to interpret the data.

The image shows data from departures in one week and isn't the complete as it contains only radio signals from one location, and it only contains departures not arrivals - so it shows only half the flights. SBAE will continue to monitor flight paths and use this to show all concerned the impacts of the airport's operations. BIA will shortly be operating their own tracker system, which should allow residents to query any flights they believe deviate from standard flight paths.

The airport are unhappy with the maps, arguing that the data is partial and that the data collection is "amateur". However, these criticisms are inaccurate, and SBAE is encouraged by the alarm shown by Bristol Airport, indicating that they are unhappy that the public can see the real routes taken by planes, rather than the theoretical ones which the airport prefer the public to believe.

The airport is currently consulting (till 17th August) on expansion proposals, to increase passenger numbers by 60% by 2016, and a 40% increase in commercial flights. Also a 50% increase in passenger car journeys to the airport, a 36% increase in night flights, and a 50% increase in summer night flights. And all that amounts to a 60% rise in carbon emissions.

*For information on how to respond to the consultation: [www.stopbia.com](http://www.stopbia.com) or [www.n-somerset.gov.uk](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk)*

### **Cardiff Airport road scheme axed**

20th July. It was announced at the unveiling of a 5-year transport plan that plans for a new link road to Cardiff Airport have been scrapped because of the cost. Only a fraction of the benefits a proposed airport link road would bring the area were associated with the airport. As an alternative, the assembly government would investigate a half-hourly express bus service from Cardiff city centre to the airport, and more frequent train services. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/8152406.stm>

### **Consultations out now on airport draft Noise Action Plans - across the country**

Many airports are very late with their Noise Action Plans, though the UK is much further ahead on noise than other EU countries. The EU deadline, as with all EU deadlines, is flexible. Some airports such as Luton, London City, and Bristol have not yet published their plan. The consultation for some of the plans which were out earlier – such as Heathrow – ends on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

The airports with plans currently out for consultation are: **Birmingham, Bournemouth, Liverpool, Gatwick, Heathrow, Stansted, Manchester, Newcastle, East Midlands and Southampton.**

The theoretical timetable is that the formal consultation ends on 21<sup>st</sup> October. On 30<sup>th</sup> November the Draft Action Plan is sent to the Secretary of State for Transport, copied to Secretary of State at DEFRA. Then some time at the end of 2009 the Noise Action Plans need to be with European Commission.

All the Noise Action Plans are a bit different, and each group and organisation will want to do their own response, raise their own issues, particularly those which are relevant for their own area. A couple of key issues common to all seem to be:

- The situation in the UK, where the airports themselves are deemed to be the "competent authority" in producing noise reduction plans is unsatisfactory. In contrast, DEFRA is itself drawing up the plans for towns, roads and railways, but the task of drawing up plans for airports has been delegated to the airports themselves, on the grounds that they have the technical expertise.

- Without strong pressure from the public, the policy adopted by the UK Government of making airport operators responsible for the noise action plans is unlikely to produce significant noise reductions. Airports have a clear commercial incentive not to reduce noise. The policy is like putting a burglar in charge of a Bank, or a fox in charge of the henhouse.

- A strategic, step-by-step approach to reduce the noise suffered by all communities is absent. All the EC requires is that the Noise Action Plans reduce noise from what it might have been, given the amount of growth envisaged at an airport.

- The noise action plans do not give any information about how much noise will be reduced from current levels, or any dates or timetables for reductions.

- The noise action plans depend hugely on newer planes being a few decibels quieter, so that more can be accommodated within the same averaged noise footprint. The general approach is that if numbers of flights rise by 20%, but noise rises by 10%, then that is a reduction in noise .... which is merely a crafty way of manipulating and distorting the statistics.

- The word "limit" is being used rather loosely, and "limit and where possible reduce". The plans are playing with semantics, and this needs to be brought to wider attention.

- The method of averaging out noise is unsatisfactory. The ANASE study showed that the government's insistence that 57db is the onset of significant annoyance is far too high. A figure of 50dB is more appropriate. This means that far more people are affected by noise than the government currently admits. 55 Lden is the European Union benchmark for excessive noise.

- The Noise Action plans should contain a timetable to phase out night flights. A reasonable definition of night would be 8 hours from 11pm to 7am.

- Existing quiet spaces should be protected. Although this is one of the requirements of noise action plans, it is going to need some pushing. The Environmental Noise Directive requires noise action plans to protect 'quiet areas' within agglomerations against an increase in noise. The noise action plans are only really talking about quiet areas in agglomerations. They do not refer to quiet areas outside agglomerations. An agglomeration is defined as an urban area with a population in excess of 250,000 inhabitants.

- The questionnaires may be in the format of tick boxes. It is generally better to make additional comments as these will be of great value in communicating your concerns more fully, rather than relying on a statistical analysis of tick box results.

Guidance from SSE is at: [http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/documents/SSE\\_NAP\\_Guidance\\_August\\_2009.pdf](http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/documents/SSE_NAP_Guidance_August_2009.pdf)

### Useful Info

- For a **daily digest of transport stories in the papers**, with many on aviation, [www.transportinfo.org.uk](http://www.transportinfo.org.uk)
- For information from the many **local groups at airports in the UK**, see the **Campaign Community** section of the AirportWatch website. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/campaigncommunity.php>
- For more about the growing problem of biofuels, see **Biofuelwatch** [www.biofuelwatch.org.uk](http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk) and biofuels and aviation at [http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/docs/aviation\\_biofuels\\_article.pdf](http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/docs/aviation_biofuels_article.pdf)
- For more information about aviation, and news on aviation stories, see the AEF (**Aviation Environment Federation**) website at [www.aef.org.uk](http://www.aef.org.uk) and the AirportWatch website.

Bulletin compiled by Sarah Clayton - with thanks to many contributors  
12.8.2009

[www.airportwatch.org.uk](http://www.airportwatch.org.uk)