

## **Heathrow 3rd runway gets the go ahead - the campaign ratchets up**



Heathrow campaigners believe they will stop a third runway being built at the airport. On 15th January, Transport Secretary Geoff Hoon gave BAA the green light to draw up detailed plans. But it is far from a done deal.

BAA will need to get Government permission for those detailed plans after they have gone out to consultation and through a Public Inquiry. On BAA's own admission that will take at least two years. That takes us beyond the next General Election. Significant,

because both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats have said they would scrap all expansion plans. But even if Labour confounded the polls and get back into power, campaigners believe they will still win.

The package announced by Geoff Hoon reeks of weakness and confusion. The plan to allow more planes on the existing runways was dropped (and that was welcomed) but the decision to allow a third runway was so full of frankly unbelievable conditions - the number of planes using the new runway would be curtailed if the levels of CO2 emissions, noise and air pollution reached unacceptable levels – that it had the hallmark of a package cobbled together at the last minute to silence Cabinet dissenters and buy off rebel Labour MPs. So, confident of eventual victory, increasingly self-assured campaigners will ratchet up the campaign. Expect a possible legal challenge, increased parliamentary activity and further media stories. But expect, too, more Flash Mobs, more imaginative stunts and direct action where residents link up with environmental activists. (John Stewart)

## **'Flash Mob' at Heathrow over 3rd runway decision**

Hundreds of activists opposed to a 3rd runway decision staged a "flash mob" protest inside Terminal 5. The action, with environmentalists joining local residents, was the first major demonstration since the Government go-ahead for the expansion plan. Showing solidarity for Sipson and Harmondsworth residents, campaigners said they would move into homes facing destruction, to support the residents.  
17.1.2009



Earlier in the week, a **Dinner at Domestic Departures** took place, when between 300 and 400 protesters descended on the airport's Terminal 1 ahead of Heathrow announcement on expansion.



The evening's protest, organised by Climate Rush, saw demonstrators, many in Edwardian costume to emulate the Suffragette movement, backed by string quartet, sharing picnics on the floor of the departure hall. Susan Kramer MP said: "It's been entirely peaceful. There's been a conga line, a group playing Edwardian music, another group playing alternative music, there have been cup cakes. It's been almost a celebration." 12.1.2009

For many, many more Heathrow stories recently, see [http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/news/detail.php?art\\_id=2662](http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/news/detail.php?art_id=2662)

## **Stansted Second runway programme - realism beginning to prevail?**



A marathon meeting on 19 January, to discuss the timing, duration and other aspects of the proposed Public Inquiry into a second runway at Stansted has left Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) cautiously optimistic that a sense of realism is beginning to prevail.

Around 150 people attended the eight hour session determined to ensure the Inspector took on board concerns that a fair and thorough inquiry be held – not one that was quick and dirty for the sake of political expediency.

Inspector Andrew Phillipson heard detailed representations from SSE, the local authorities, Stansted Airlines, BAA and others and agreed to take full account of these before making his recommendations to the Secretary of State at the end of January. However, whether the Secretary of State takes these on board is another matter and SSE has expressed concern that political desire to drive through plans for a second runway at any cost could overrule the Inspector's desire for a fair and thorough inquiry.

Evidence from the major parties, including BAA, led to a consensus that between 144 and 200 sitting days would be required, equivalent to an inquiry lasting between 15 and 20 months. This was significantly longer than the Inspector's provisional view of six months. Similarly, on closer examination of the potential pitfalls, he appeared to recognise that concurrent sessions could compromise the inquiry's fairness and would not necessarily be more efficient.

In addition, SSE and the Stansted airlines both argued for a deferral of the start of the inquiry until September on the basis that fundamental issues remained to be resolved and the local authorities said they had no objection to this. However, BAA clung to its position that the inquiry should start in April despite the many uncertainties highlighted by the Inspector and other parties.

Two of these fundamental uncertainties would be resolved one way or another within the next two months: SSE's pending High Court Appeal into the permission to expand on the existing runway, and the expected confirmation by the Competition Commission that Stansted Airport should be sold. Either of these issues could well lead to the cancellation of the second runway inquiry. (SSE) More details at: <http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/press350.html>

## AirportWatch to Focus on Air Freight

In spite of the global economic downturn, and anticipation of an overall upward trajectory in the oil price, many UK airports are pursuing cargo expansion plans stretching forward to 2030 and beyond. East Midland plans to increase freight volumes by three or even fourfold, Kent Airport (Manston) intends to increase freight volumes fifteen fold from 33,000 tonnes per year to 500,00 tonnes, a new centre for chilled food produce including fish from Iceland opened recently at



Humberside Airport and Stansted Airport plans to increase its freight volumes six fold, to about 3,000 tonnes per day. Manchester Airport plans to demolish Rose Cottage, a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II listed building in one of the last remaining parts of the green belt to build two giant cargo sheds.

Several smaller regional airports, many having failed to attract the projected passenger numbers, are turning to freight expansion, including Southend, Bournemouth and Carlisle which all plan to become freight hubs.

The main categories of air cargo include perishable goods (food, flowers, pharmaceuticals and other goods requiring temperature control), all kinds of consumer goods from toys to electronics and fashion, industrial components, hazardous cargo such as corrosive chemicals and nuclear materials, valuables such as gems and heavyweight industrial equipment.

AirportWatch has been awarded funding from the Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation to support our work on air freight. The funding will be used to produce a booklet outlining airport freight growth in the UK and the issues raised such as greenhouse gas emissions, noise and night flights, and to support groups in campaigning on the issue.

The research will look at the inter-relationship between cargo and passenger flights. While a greater proportion of air cargo is currently carried in the belly-hold of passenger flights than in freighters, the latter is growing more quickly and it is expected that, globally, the majority of cargo will be flown in dedicated freighters within a few years. As the newer, marginally more efficient passenger planes take to the skies, the older, noisier more polluting planes are often converted to freighters. The booklet will also focus on the economics of air freight and build on the success of previous work that has uncovered tax breaks and other subsidies to the aviation industry.

I have researched air freight for over two years, and will be working with AirportWatch to produce the booklet. The AirportWatch website now has a news section on freight which is regularly updated, this has some links for researching what is flown in and out of UK airports, and local campaign groups are welcome to send their news. (By Rose Bridger). E: [rose@airportwatch.org.uk](mailto:rose@airportwatch.org.uk)

## Gatwick - airport sale and new legal agreement

**Sale of Gatwick:** According to the press, at least six indicative bids have been put in to buy Gatwick. One is from the Manchester Airport Group, owned by Manchester City Council and other Manchester councils; the others are from faceless international groups.<sup>(1)</sup>

The sale process has been conducted in secret, and GACC has no idea what potential purchasers have been told - they comment that selling an old bicycle on eBay would be more open and subject to stricter rules.

<sup>1</sup> Ontario Teachers and Canada Pension Fund with 3i ; Global Infrastructure Partners (who own City airport); Babcock and Brown with Deutsche Bank; Citi Infrastructure Investors (who recently bought Chicago Midway airport); Hochtief AirPort (who own Hamburg, Dusseldorf, Sydney and Athens airports). The sale is being managed by HSBC and the Royal Bank of Scotland (sic) which are reported to be willing to give credit of up to £1.6 billion to a buyer - which is surprising since they are so reluctant to lend to small firms.

<sup>2</sup> 17 December 2008

GACC has written to Geoffrey Hoon to express concern that a vital piece of national infrastructure is to be sold with no safeguards either for residents or for the wider national interest. Competition should not be pursued at the cost of a worsening environment.

The sale of Gatwick - and probably Stansted - is being enforced by the Competition Commission. The Commission's terms of reference do not include the environment. In all 107 pages of their recent report (2) the words 'climate change' do not occur once! GACC has sent a response to the Commission (see [www.gacc.org.uk](http://www.gacc.org.uk)) They are not opposed in principle to the sale of Gatwick but are concerned about the lack of environmental safeguards. Their experience since the takeover of BAA by Ferrovial indicates that a foreign owner tends to be less concerned with the welfare of local people than with maximising the profit that they can take out of the country.

**A new legal agreement:** A new legal agreement (technically a s.106 agreement) covering the period to 2015 has been signed between BAA and West Sussex County Council / Crawley Borough Council, and has been endorsed by other local councils. It does not alter the earlier legal agreement that no new runway can be constructed before 2019 (for details of that legal agreement see [www.gacc.org.uk](http://www.gacc.org.uk) / The Runway Issue).



The Councils around Gatwick are environmentally minded and did their best, but BAA were tough negotiators not prepared to sign up to anything that might reduce the price they hope to get for Gatwick.

The main feature of the new agreement is a requirement on BAA (and the new owner of Gatwick) to produce action plans to cover issues such as noise, pollution, water quality and flooding. The action plans will be assessed by consultants (paid half by BAA and half by the

Councils) to see if they are 'fit for purpose'. There is however no definition of what the action plans should contain, and no definition of what purpose they have to be 'fit for'. The first noise action plan has appeared on the BAA website but GACC have not yet had time to study it in detail.

GACC is disappointed that the agreement does not contain legally binding obligations to prevent any increase in noise, pollution and to put a limit on the increase in road traffic and climate change damage.

Some of the specific legal obligations are pathetic. For example, on climate change, all that BAA have undertaken to do is to produce a report (contents unspecified) by June 2009 and to "continue an ongoing dialogue on climate change initiatives with local authorities and other key stakeholders."

Whether the action plans are effective will depend largely on the goodwill of the new owner of Gatwick. The Councils are optimistic that the agreement will work: GACC is sceptical, and will keep a critical eye on progress. (GACC)

## **Demand for curbs on night flights - East Midlands Airport**

A petition to 10 Downing Street, demanding tighter restrictions on night flights from East Midlands Airport now has 590 signatures. It was created by Steve Charlish, the chairman of the local campaign, DEMAND (Demand East Midlands Airport is Now Designated). [www.demand.uk.net](http://www.demand.uk.net) In March, statistics revealed the airport, at Castle Donington, has more night-time flights than London's Gatwick and Heathrow airports combined.

At Heathrow, there were 6,238 flights between 11.30pm and 6am in 2007, while at Gatwick, there were 12,909. DEMAND said the night flights were keeping people awake and damaging their health by causing stress.

They want East Midlands Airport to be designated (under section 78 of the 1982 Civil Aviation Act) in the same way as the London airports, Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, which have their night flights restricted by Government regulations.

On the 10 Downing Street website, Mr Charlish says: "We ask that the Secretary of State applies controls, designated under section 78 of the 1982 Civil Aviation Act, that the airport limits the excessive environmental noise blight from the unrestricted night flying permitted at the airport."

The petition, (at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/peacefulnight> ) will close on March 25th, and will then be delivered to the Prime Minister.



DEMAND have been pursuing s.78 Designation, as a means of limiting the number of night flights in and out of EMA, for years. Doubts were raised recently by parties keen to preserve the status quo at EMA by reckoning that s.78 Designation could actually increase the number of night flights. With the perception that s.78 Designation could actually worsen things a vote was taken at the last EMA Independent Consultative Committee meeting, with the result that only three (or thereabouts) of us actually voted for retaining the pursuit of Designation. Surprisingly, a number of residents' and amenity group representatives voted for abandoning Designation. Unsurprisingly, there was a large turnout for that particular ICC meeting, with several faces we hadn't seen for quite a long time. It is thus apparent that s.78 Designation was seen as a real threat to the continuance of this airport's appalling environmental record regarding night-flying.

Coincidentally (!?) EMA has a planning application to carry out modest lengthening of the runway ends. EMA maintain that there will be no change in noise, etc. The Council determination for the runway is the **3rd of March 2009**.

It appears that the western end of the runway, adjacent to the huge DHL apron will allow ingress of Very Large Aircraft. The turning arcs of VLAs appear not to be catered for as far as egress is concerned at the western end. Other significant factors are that the runway slopes downhill from this end. With tolerable tailwind limits, colder and therefore denser air at night, max takeoff weights will be catered for. None of this is mentioned in the Environmental Statement supplied to the local authority. Furthermore, when EMA enlarged and modified its lower controlled airspace a new route was created and this appears to have had little use so far. With the runway extension, heavily-laden freighters will be permitted to make easterly departures in a straight line over the northern part of East Anglia, out to Northern Europe. This direct line saves time and money in that turning south from EMA and leaving UK airspace via Clacton is avoided. This wasn't mentioned in the ES either. (from DEMAND and Leicestershire CPRE).

## **Birmingham runway extension deferred awaiting S106 agreement**



Birmingham Friends of the Earth's Flyagra campaign against the proposed runway extension at Birmingham International Airport (BIA) reached its climax towards the end of last year.

On 1st December campaigners from Birmingham and Solihull FoE groups dressed as pilots and airport ground crew wheeled a trolley stacked with boxes of 'duty-free Flyagra' to the doors of Solihull Council House for a photo opportunity with a delegation of supportive Solihull councillors. The

Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee was due to decide whether or not to grant planning permission for the runway extension at a special meeting scheduled for 15th December.

In the event the Committee, while minded to approve the application, unanimously agreed to defer approval until an updated Section 106 Agreement and revised planning conditions had been agreed between the Council and the airport operator.

Birmingham FoE and local residents' group Birmingham Airport anti-Noise Group (BANG) will continue to push the Council to drive a hard bargain with BIA and secure tougher controls on noise, night flights and airport-related road traffic. (James Botham).



## The Northern Climate Rush - Manchester

Around 50 climate change activists gathered in Terminal 3 of Manchester Airport to protest against airport expansion and domestic flights. The demo mirrored the Climate Rush 'Dinner at Domestic Departures' protest at Heathrow's Terminal 1 at the same time.



The protesters dressed in Edwardian period arrived to find Terminal 3 locked down with around 70 police officers, including Forward Intelligence Teams from the Metropolitan police. They were read parts of the Riot Act before entering a 'designated protest area'.

There are around 32 flights a day between Manchester and the London hubs, despite the high speed rail connection.

Manchester Airport claims it intends to go carbon neutral by 2015 - but this will not include the emissions from the aeroplanes. 12.1.2009.

The decision on **Rose Cottage** has been delayed, because the information English Heritage wanted from the Airport's agents, White Young Green (WYG), had not been sent over. WYG were supposed to supply English Heritage with either plans that incorporate Rose Cottage within the development (which they have resisted) OR information over why they cannot incorporate Rose Cottage. Sections of PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) give guidance on how listed buildings should be conserved, or incorporated into new development.

Manchester City Council announced their 'Call to Action' on climate change on 14th January. This stated plans are to reduce the City's emissions by one third by 2020. "Great!" thought SEMA, surely if the Council owns 55% of Manchester Airport Group (MAG - which also owns Nottingham East Midlands, Humberside and Bournemouth – and are considering buying Gatwick) then surely this 'Call to Action' would have to curtail the Airport's ambitions by 2030? Alas no. The Council simply washed their hands of this issue. The Council Chair, Sir Richard Leese, replied that they can't legally constrain the airport and that if the planes didn't fly out from Manchester then it would probably be from somewhere else, causing more pollution. (by SEMA).

More information on the SEMA (Stop Expansion at Manchester Airport) temporary website at <http://stopexpansionatmanchesterairport.pbwiki.com>

## Please sign the Lydd Airport petition:

**The petition states:** "Lydd Airport is a small local airport owned by Sheikh Fahad al Athel, which is planning to become a regional airport with 2 million passengers per annum by 2015. Lydd is not a suitable site for a regional airport being surrounded by fragile habitats protected under

European and UK laws, located under the largest migratory bird route in the South of England, located less than 3 miles from the Dungeness nuclear complex and less than 2 miles and 8 miles from the Lydd and Hythe military ranges. The growth in the airport will directly and indirectly damage the rare plant, invertebrate, bird and animal populations of Dungeness and pose a major public safety risk as fully loaded B737s will be taking off and landing less than three miles from the Dungeness nuclear power complex."



**Desired outcome:**

Not to have any further development of Lydd Airport

**Who we need to influence:**

Local Councillors, local MPs, Lydd Airport management, local people, people concerned about air safety, people concern about the environment.

Stop the Lydd Airport Development - <http://petitionthem.com/default.asp?sect=detail&pet=3729>

## **AirportWatch Conference - Sat 28th and Sun 29th March, in London**

### ***around the theme of* Successful Airport Campaigning**

Aviation has shot up the political agenda. During the last 2 years, campaigns against airport expansion have sprung up all over the country. **This conference is not just for AirportWatch campaigners. It is for everyone campaigning on airports and aviation.**

It will focus on campaigning - and what makes a successful campaign. Campaigners will talk about their successes – and failures. You certainly don't need to have taken part in any dynamic campaign already to come to the conference!

It is a chance to meet people campaigning at airports up and down the country, share your experiences, look back on what has worked well and what has not, discuss new ideas with other campaigners, and be part of a wider - and more effective - national network.

**For more details, and how to register (conference is free, except for £10 for lunch) see [www.airportwatch.org.uk/conferences](http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/conferences)**

## **Bristol airport pre-planning consultation, for huge expansion**

Bristol International Airport announced the pre-planning consultation on 21st January, running until 6 March 2009. The plans are on the Bristol International Airport (BIA) website. A full planning application is expected in several months. BIA claims its plans would generate up to 4,000 new jobs, and the majority of the proposed development would sit within its 176 hectare site. Proposals include extending the terminal building, additional car parking and new aircraft stands. This could enable the airport to handle 10 million passengers a year - up from around 6 million now. The local press has been totally in favour of the expansion, due to promises of jobs regional and locally - plus the hope of inbound tourism due to the falling pound. Exhibitions about the proposals will be at BIA till 6th March. Meanwhile, passenger numbers fell at Bristol by 12.1% in December 2008, compared to December 2007, and fell by 12.1% also in November - year on year. The full year passenger figure for Bristol was 5.9% up on 2007, with most growth in the early part of the year.

Hilary Burn, spokeswoman for Stop Bristol Airport Expansion, said the economic arguments for the expansion were "extremely weak". She said: "Their figures for inbound tourism revenue do not stand up. There is also no proof that expansion will provide any further benefit for local businesses, which are increasingly exchanging travel for video-conferencing and other green solutions.

"Expansion at any airport, whether it be Heathrow or Bristol, makes a mockery of the Government's green credentials as supposed leaders on climate change. We cannot keep growing airports and expect to make the massive cuts in carbon emissions that we need to safeguard our future."

## Latest CAA UK passenger figures for 2008

These are provisional figures, and not all the airports have yet given their data. They so far show a decline of 2.1% for the UK for the year. For details, see:

### CAA UK Airport Provisional Statistics: 2008 - 12

<http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=80&pagetype=88&sglid=11&fld=200812>

#### Terminal passengers, % change since last year

PLYMOUTH	26.6
NEWQUAY	22.2
BELFAST CITY (GEORGE BEST)	17.6
LONDON CITY	12
BRISTOL	5.9
<b>BIRMINGHAM</b>	<b>4.8</b>
EAST MIDLANDS INTERNATIONAL	3.9
LEEDS BRADFORD	0
PRESTWICK	-0.3
<b>EDINBURGH</b>	<b>-0.5</b>
SOUTHAMPTON	-1
<b>HEATHROW</b>	<b>-1.4</b>
<b>GATWICK</b>	<b>-2.8</b>
ABERDEEN	-3.5
INVERNESS	-3.8
<b>MANCHESTER</b>	<b>-3.8</b>
CARDIFF WALES	-5.5
EXETER	-6
<b>STANSTED</b>	<b>-6</b>
<b>GLASGOW</b>	<b>-6.8</b>
DUNDEE	-6.9
HUMBERSIDE	-8.9
DONCASTER SHEFFIELD	-9.9
NEWCASTLE	-10.8
NORWICH	-16.6
BLACKPOOL	-21.2
<b>TOTAL OF ABOVE AIRPORTS</b>	<b>-2.1</b>

Not all the available figures are shown here, to save space

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### Useful Info

- For a **daily digest of transport stories in the papers**, including many on aviation, see [www.transportinfo.org.uk](http://www.transportinfo.org.uk)
- For more information about aviation, and news on aviation stories, see the **Aviation Environment Federation (AEF)** website at [www.aef.org.uk](http://www.aef.org.uk) and the **AirportWatch** website (below)
- For legal advice contact the **Environmental Law Foundation**. They give initial advice free. [www.elflaw.org](http://www.elflaw.org)

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