



# No Airport @ Cliffe Information and Action

Special  
Airport  
Edition  
August 2002

## Cliffe Airport – The Next Steps

In March we included 'Cliffe Airport – The Facts' in the Special Community Transport Edition of the Clarion. We promised to keep you informed. At that time we were expecting an announcement in May, but for various reasons it was delayed until the end of July when a consultation document **The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom: South East – a National Consultation** was published. This special edition summarises the options in the document and some of the affects an airport at Cliffe would have on the local and wider areas. We also look at what the Parish is doing, with others and what YOU can do to ensure our message is voice is heard loud and clear.

The document is one of seven consultation documents covering the whole of the UK, it seeks your views on the following three questions: -

- Should new airport capacity be provided in the South East over the next 30 years and, if so, how much? A particular issue is whether there is a case for having at least one major hub airport.
- Where should any additional runway capacity be provided? A particular issue is whether or not Heathrow should be developed further.
- What controls, mitigation measures and compensation should be put in place to limit and manage the adverse impacts of any additional airport development on people and on the natural and built environment?

In 1999 a study was commissioned to look at this SERAS). It reported on the current pressures at existing airports and put forward a number of options to plan for additional airport capacity over the next 30 years.

The SERAS study rejected proposals for Maplin, Foulness and Marinair in the Thames Estuary, but did investigate a site at Cliffe for a major airport and Alconbury in Cambridgeshire for a specialist freight airport. Their investigations also looked into the issues of Surface Access (Road and Rail), Environmental Impacts (Daytime and Nighttime noise, Local Air Quality, Employment/Land Use and Urbanisation) and Regional Impacts.

### The Main Consultation Options

(What the document says)

#### 1) **Do Nothing**

The economic and environmental cost of doing nothing was investigated. This considers how we can make better use of what is already available. Environmental conditions at current airports could still decline with additional airport capacity and jobs moving to other airports in France, Holland and Germany.

#### 2) **A Hub Airport**

The document explains the importance of a major Hub airport (as Heathrow operates) where lots of domestic and shorter distance international flights can deliver passengers to the air-

port and then switch them to larger long distance flights. This makes both the short and long distance flights more viable and economical.

#### 3) **Heathrow – additional runway**

The impact of providing an additional runway north of the current airport (with additional terminal buildings and Railway and Road connections) is assessed. This would be a shorter runway, but would take a lot of smaller planes on domestic routes off of the main runways and leave room for additional longer distance flights on the current ones.

About 260 properties would have to be compulsory purchased (CPO'd).

Terminal 5 has recently been granted permission and additional rail capacity is being provided to the airport.

There is concern about the environment of people living on the current and new flight paths into and out of the airport, with levels of NO2 exceeding EU limits. There would be noise nuisance (> 57dBA) for 332,000 people

#### 4) **Gatwick**

In 1979 British Airports Authority signed a legal agreement with the local County Council that no further runways would be built until at least 2019. This means that an additional runway could not be available until after 2020 and would not meet the demands expected. For this reason expansion of Gatwick has been excluded

#### 5) **Stansted**

Although a relatively new airport, Stansted has been slow to take off but the introduction of a number of low cost airlines has now taken it close to capacity. The option of one, two or three new runways is investigated.

Additional Rail and Road links would be required.

Between 100 and 200 properties would have to be CPO'd depending on the option. There would be noise nuisance (> 57dBA) for 14,000 to 28,000 people.

#### 6) **Luton**

A new southern runway and/or a re-aligned runway would provide additional (limited) capacity. About 10 properties would be CPO'd. Noise nuisance (> 57dBA) would affect between 47,000 and 49,000 people.

## Why “No Airport @ Cliffe”

### 7) Cliffe

Options for a major new Hub airport with 2, 3, 4 or 5 runways are investigated (see map). The proposal would mean the excavation of Northward Hill (site of the RSPB Heronry at High Halstow) and other land to create a new ‘platform’ for the runways and airport buildings.

Major new road and rail infrastructure would be needed to link the airport to the A13 and Fenchurch Street Railway line in Essex and the A2 and Channel Tunnel Rail Link to the south would be required. An option for a further crossing into Essex may be required if 4 or 5 runways are built.

1,100 properties would be CPO’d. This would include ALL of Allhallows, nearly all of St. Mary Hoo and about 1/3 of High Halstow and a few other individual buildings.

The runway alignment would mean that Cliffe would be directly in the normal line of take-off, Cliffe Woods would be near to the line of take-off for flights using a additional diagonal runway.

To make it viable, large numbers of flights would have to be transferred from Heathrow (40% of scheduled services), Gatwick (23% of charter services) and Stansted (11% of low cost services to Cliffe).

Potential for 24 hour operation for freight.

Between 4,000 (2 runways) and 17,000 (4 runways) people would be affected by noise (> 57 dBA). No figures are provided for nighttime noise which is even more sensitive.

The impact on the natural environment is recognised. There is a suggestion that other land in Kent could be CPO’d to provide an alternative location (and that potential sites have been discussed with the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)).

The high level of environmental and planning protection of this area means that the Government would have to demonstrate all reasonable alternatives had been considered and that compensatory measures will be carried forward to prevent an overall loss of habitat and bird numbers. The potential for birds colliding with aircraft is also recognised and says that options for managing this are being investigated.

To prevent flooding the airport would require a level platform area of up to 15m (c. 50 feet). A number of marshes and creeks would be destroyed. This would be likely to increase the risk of flooding elsewhere on the peninsula. Demand for water at the airport may be difficult to meet. London could also be affected.

There is also some concern about the impact to Air Traffic control and potential conflict with flights into and out of London City, Gatwick and Heathrow that fly over this area.

8) **Manston** airport has been considered, but there is a likelihood of major environmental impact on Ramsgate Town if this was to be a major airport.

- 1) Environment and Planning Protection  
This area has amongst the very highest levels of protection in the country and possibly the world. International treaties have been signed by the UK government to protect the Thames Estuary and Marshes (RAMSAR). If there is development here, it could happen anywhere.
- 2) Cliffe would fall directly under the take-off line
- 3) Construction of the airport and infrastructure would blight the Parish for ten years or more. 2 motorway link roads, Railway links and 1 or 2 crossings of the Thames into Essex would turn the Parish area into a huge construction site with major disruption to local roads, services and way of life.
- 4) We would lose access to footpaths and countryside throughout our area.
- 5) Noise nuisance is felt to be less of an impact in our area because of the smaller number of people affected, but at night, we can clearly hear the noise of traffic and diesel trains at Hoo Junction miles away.
- 6) The airport and approach roads would be lit 24 hours a day and would mean almost permanent ‘daylight’ for areas of the Parish.
- 7) The proposed road links to the A13 in the north and A2 in the south would be putting large amounts of additional traffic onto those roads and the M25. Recent improvements to the A13 and current works on the A2/M2 are to cope with current and future traffic forecasts and do not take account of an airport. The roads are already nearing capacity with long delays at peak times.
- 8) Rail links to the Fenchurch Street (‘Misery Line’) and to the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) in the south are also planned to be at or near capacity, without the addition of airport traffic. There are proposals to allow domestic trains onto the CTRL from Ashford and the North Kent Line that would allow journey times from the Medway Towns to St. Pancras in about 30 minutes – these could be lost if airport trains were using the capacity.
- 9) There are not enough registered un-employed people in Kent and Essex to fill the jobs that would be created at the airport (and there could be many thousands more indirect jobs). This would mean greater commuting into the area by road and rail – further stretching the infrastructure.
- 10) Additional jobs are also likely to result in a demand for more housing. This could not be accommodated in the current ‘brown-field’ sites and would mean the loss of further green field sites.
- 11) There would be considerable pressure on:
  - Health – Local Doctors and Hospitals—with a new hospital likely to be needed to cope.
  - Social Services – To service the increased population and the airport
  - Police – To service the increased population and the airport
  - Emergency Planning – The worst case scenarios for airport disaster have to be planned for.

12) Who pays? The consultation document says that the aviation industry has to pay for the new airport and infrastructure – is the FULL cost of the infrastructure and ongoing local pressures accounted for? The aviation industry will be concerned about meeting the costs identified, let alone others. They would also have to relocate people and services from Heathrow and Stansted adding even more cost, and reducing the money available to address local issues.

13) The Economic Case—It just does not add up! The table shows the estimated cost and benefits of the various options. The Cliffe option is the worst cost case for expansion and we feel it does not even cover the true cost.

Option	Benefits (£billions)	Cost (£billions)	Net (£billions)
Maximum use of existing runways only	6.7	1.8	4.9
Heathrow: one new runway	12.0	4.2	7.8
Stansted: one new runway	11.0	3.9	7.1
Stansted: two new runways	14.0	4.6	9.4
Heathrow and Stansted: one new runway each	17.8	5.5	12.3
Stansted: three new runways	17.8	5.2	12.6
Heathrow: one new runway and Stansted: two new runways	20.9	6.2	14.7
Cliffe: four runways	17.3	8.9	8.4

Elsewhere the document claims a 4-runway airport at Cliffe would cost £11.5 billion at today's prices.

14) Impact on other areas. The airport and the infrastructure proposed would have a major impact on local towns and villages. Both during construction and operation. There would be additional pressure to build more homes and this would also add to the pressures on all local services. Aircraft would fly over other areas of Kent on their way into and out of the airport, occasionally they would also need to be stacked on their approach.

15) Other Issues—There are many other issues that arise from this proposal and we have only touched the surface of some of the major ones. You will know of many more.

### Parish Council Response

Along with other Parish Councils and local action groups we have looked at the proposals for a new airport at Cliffe and have agreed to oppose the option.

We have been active in trying to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of the implications of this option to our local environment and further away as well.

There are a number of concerns, we share with others, that are

not fully reflected in the document and we will be making sure that they are brought to the attention of Government Ministers, MPs, Medway Council and others during the consultation period.

We have also agreed to work with other Parish Councils and Action Groups to ensure the maximum publicity for our case and the maximum response to the consultation from people like **you** and continue to press for this option to be dropped and not included in the Government's White Paper in the Spring (March/April 2003).

The status of this area has grown in recent decades, and it was always described as a vital green lung for the Thames Gateway development—it needs to be protected.

We know that locally RSPB and Medway Council will be spending well over £100,000 to seek the highest level advice and technical assessment of these proposals. RSPB have already indicated that they will take any proposal to develop an airport at Cliffe to the European Courts if necessary.

Medway Council will also be carrying out a major consultation exercise with exhibitions and public meetings across the area—look out for dates in our Parish.

There will be more information from the Parish Council over the next few months. With advice about completing the questionnaire and responding to the questions raised in the document.

### What Can You Do?

- We must ensure the highest level of response to the consultation document (both in quantity and quality). We are investigating the delivery of the questionnaire to every household, with a summary of the issues and advice on completing the form. Your individual response will have more impact than any petition or duplicated letter, although they do help as well.
- Talk to everybody about the issues—get others involved.
- Write to Medway Council and the local MP – both have indicated their opposition to the option (address details later)
- Use Radio and Television Phone-Ins, write to local and national newspapers
- Demonstrate your opposition by displaying the poster included with this Clarion.
- Look out for events in the area (and outside) over the next few months. It is planned to continue the pressure right up to the end of the consultation period.
- **Don't leave it to others** – offer to help, you will be very welcome and will help spread the load and increase the speed at which we can get our information out to all the local residents.
- **Our biggest danger is COMPLACENCY**

**Cliffe and Cliffe  
Woods Parish  
Council**

**Clerk : Mr Chris McLoughlin**  
38 Milton Avenue  
Cliffe Woods  
Rochester  
Kent  
ME3 8TS

**Phone: 01634—221690**

The Parish Council continues to work with other organisations to improve the quality of life in the Parish. A further issue of The Clarion is in preparation to keep you in touch with what is happening in the area and seeking your help in issues like Community Transport.



**Cliffe & Cliffe Woods  
Parish Councillors**

**Cliffe Village Ward**

Thelma Enticknap	220487
Freda Frost	220687
Derek Green	220240
Bob Haughey	221813
Keith Scarfe	221852
Bryan Mooney	222142
Ray Letheren	222224
Jasper Wright	220184

**Cliffe Woods Ward**

Nicola Boswell	221361
Rob Davis	220183
Dianne Foreman	221193
Chris Fribbins	220932
Ben Adshead	220495
Ken Kentell	221434
Lesley Parker	220503
One vacancy	

**Contact Addresses**

**Medway Council**

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**Kent County Council**

Web: [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)  
(Includes on-line questionnaire)

**Medway Today/ Messenger**

Letters, FREEPOST, SEA0334,  
Chatham, Kent, ME4 4BR  
Email: [medwaytoday@thekmgroup.co.uk](mailto:medwaytoday@thekmgroup.co.uk)  
WEB: [www.kentonline.co.uk/specialfeatures/](http://www.kentonline.co.uk/specialfeatures/)

**Medway News/Standard**

12 New Road, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6AT  
Email: [newsdesk.medway@kentregionalnewspapers.co.uk](mailto:newsdesk.medway@kentregionalnewspapers.co.uk)

**BBC**

Web: [www.bbc.co.uk/kent/news/issue\\_week/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/kent/news/issue_week/)

**RSPB**

Perry Haines (campaign coordinator)  
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**No Airport@Cliffe (on the Hoo  
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**Responses to questions in the document**

Future Development of Air Transport –  
South East  
Department for Transport  
Zone 1/28C  
FREEPOST LON 17806  
London SW1P 4YS  
Also reply by e-mail via the WEB site  
[www.airconsult.gov.uk](http://www.airconsult.gov.uk)

**Copies of the full consultation document (The Future Development of Air  
Transport in the United Kingdom: South East A National Consultation) and/or  
the summary and questionnaire can be obtained (Free of Charge) from**

Downloaded from the Internet – [www.airconsult.gov.uk](http://www.airconsult.gov.uk)

Printed Documents can be ordered

By Phone 0845 100 5554

By E-mail [dft@twoten.press.net](mailto:dft@twoten.press.net)

By Post – DfT Free Literature, PO Box No 236. Wetherby, LS23 7NB

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**Medway MP**

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E-Mail: [marshallandrewsr@parliament.uk](mailto:marshallandrewsr@parliament.uk)  
Or via [www.faxyourmp.co.uk](http://www.faxyourmp.co.uk)

(Also support Michael Meacher's comments on the environmental impact of the Cliffe Option)

Rt. Hon. Michael Meacher MP,  
Minister of State (Environment)  
Department of Environment, Food and  
Rural Affairs (DEFRA),  
Noble House, 17 Smith Square, London  
SWP 3JR

**Members of European Parliament  
South East Region (with Kent addresses)**

Peter Skinner, MEP,  
99 Kent Road, Dartford, Kent, DA1 2AJ  
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**Dickens Country Protection Society**

(copy your letters to them and  
they will deliver them to Whitehall)

Mrs Diana Barker,  
18 Cypress Road, Frindsbury,  
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**Completed NOP questionnaires**

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