

DR CAROLINE LUCAS

**Green Party Member of the European Parliament
for the South East of the UK**



www.carolinelucasmep.org.uk

Mr Keith Holland
Planning Department
Rushmoor Borough Council
Farnborough Road
Farnborough
Hampshire
GU14 7JU

24th July 2009

Your ref: 09/00313/REVPP

Dear Mr Holland,

*TAG application for an increase in business aviation movements at Farnborough Airport
Variation of condition 8 of planning permission APP/P1750/A/06/2024640, 13 March 2008*

The application should be refused on the following grounds:

Climate change and the economy

It would be catastrophic both environmentally and economically to permit TAG a 79 per cent expansion of movements at Farnborough. Aviation is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions in Europe, increasing at about 6 per cent per year and accounting for at least 13 per cent of all emissions in the UK. It is imperative that we act to *reduce* these emissions - not allow them to increase.

Industrialised countries such as the United Kingdom need to cut emissions by 90% by 2030 - or the equivalent of 10% year on year. There is increasingly a scientific consensus that we should not exceed greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere of 450 parts per million (ppm) - and some would argue for a much lower concentration.

The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change (2006) warned that the costs of not acting to prevent climate change would far exceed those of tackling it, and that the costs of unmitigated climate change could, in a worst case scenario, be as much as twenty per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Lord Stern in particular warned in particular that 'deep emissions cuts will ... be required in the transport sector.'

The government responded to the findings of the Stern Review with its Climate Change Act in 2008, which includes the target of reducing UK emissions by 80 per cent from 1990 levels by 2050, with the overall aim of reducing global emissions by 50%. Most recently, on 15th July 2009, it published a 'UK Low Carbon Transition Plan', which sets out strategy to 2020. The target for a

reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from UK aviation to below 2005 levels by 2050 is reiterated. In planning terms, the 'Climate Change Supplement to PPS1', 2007, is also a material consideration in this case. This requires planning authorities to apply principles which will minimise future vulnerability in a changing climate.

Business aviation is particularly costly in terms of greenhouse gas emissions - the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Hampshire, has calculated that, per kilometre per person travelled, it produces ten times the amount of greenhouse gas emissions than business class scheduled aviation. Support by the business community for proposals to increase movements at Farnborough airport should be regarded with this perspective.

Pollution, noise and impacts on health

Aviation is one of the most highly polluting modes of transport. This includes noise pollution (with associated health costs in lost sleep, damage to children's education etc) and air pollution (including CO₂, nitrogen oxides, and carbon monoxide). The problems may be felt only in a localised area (though in the case of air pollution, this must be questionable), but the associated costs are borne more generally e.g. through the health service and the education system. Pollution from aviation constitutes a major hidden cost to the economy, which is born not by the industry but by society as a whole.

EU members have adopted the 1999 World Health Organisation recommendations that the welfare of communities must be put first when creating transport policy. Noise is not just irritating; it is a serious health risk too. According to substantial evidence, including a study published in the Lancet in 2004, adults who are repeatedly disturbed by noise suffer sleep loss, fatigue, hypertension and accidents from concentration failure, especially if they are carrying out complex tasks.

Children in schools or homes under flight paths can chronically under-perform. A study at Schipol airport showed higher than average levels of poor reading comprehension due to aircraft noise exposure. Another study undertaken at Munich airport revealed that long-term memory and reading deficits in children were eliminated when Munich airport closed, but emerged in children near the new airport. Worryingly, stress responses, such as increased blood pressure and higher levels of adrenaline when at rest, were also revealed when comparison was made with children not exposed to chronic aircraft noise. So, the noise issue must be addressed, given the proximity of homes to the airport.

I have been contacted by a number of people living close to Farnborough airport who are extremely anxious about the impact of any changes to the flights patterns will have on their quality of life. I am urging you, on their behalf, to reject TAG Aviation's planning proposal.

Public safety

I would also refer you to the submission by Farnborough Aerodrome Residents Association (FARA), specifically their comments about Third Party Risk and the level of development within a Public Safety Zone. I would echo FARA's concerns, and urge Rushmoor Borough Council to ensure that the safety of the local community is paramount.

I would appreciate being kept fully informed of the outcome of this planning application.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Caroline Lucas, Green Party MEP.