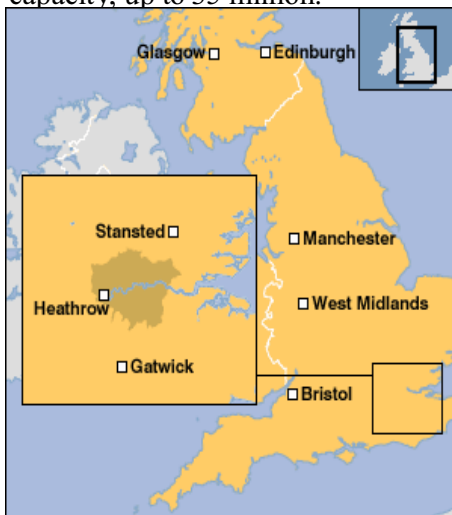


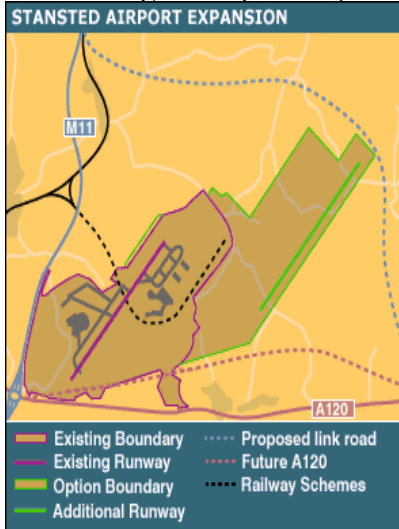
Should a second runway be built at Stansted Airport?



The article is about exploring the view if Stansted should get a second runway or not. The British Airports Authority wants to build a second runway and a new terminal at Britain's third busiest airport by 2015, serving 68 million passengers a year by around 2030. Announcing its planning application, BAA said the expansion would create more than 13,000 jobs and boost the economy by £9 billion. Stansted has grown very rapidly in recent years, particularly in the leisure market. In 2003 it handled nearly 19 million passengers compared with fewer than 7 million in 1998. The airport has planning approval to cater for up to 25 million passengers, subject to an annual aircraft movement limit of 241,000. At current rates of growth, Stansted runway capacity could be fully used within a few years. However more terminal capacity would allow passengers numbers to continue to grow without additional runway capacity, up to 35 million.



Stansted Airport is a large passenger airport with a single runway and hub for a number of major European low-cost airlines. It is located in the Uttlesford District of the English county of Essex about 30 miles north-east of London. It is connected to northeast London and Cambridge by the M11 motorway and to Colchester and Harwich by the A120 dual carriageway. The access to the motorway has been improved with a new grade separated junction.



If it does go ahead, the expansion of Stansted airport will have many impacts as it would take up more land so it will swallow up miles of Essex countryside and require the demolition of hundreds of homes and dozens of listed buildings. There are many advantages and disadvantages of Stansted having a second round way. The advantages are; it would generate 50,000 jobs over the next thirty years. And more profits for BAA who own it. The roads will also be improved as a new motorway link would be needed from the M11 near Ugley, and a second rail tunnel and new tracks would be needed from the airport to the West Anglia main line. The disadvantages are: it would increase the noise and pollution close to landing and take-off routes, and because they need more space they going to destroy rural land as the Europe's finest medieval forest and a clutch of historic hamlets will be destroyed.

The local people have mixed feelings but most of them don't want Stansted to have a second runway. Some of the people who do want the second runway to take part like Steve think, "*The expansion is a good thing it will bring in much needed jobs and add to the local economy. Those who are opposed stating noise pollution and killing of nature have only got to look at the A120 expansion to see how nature can be preserved and the benefit expansion has to all people in Essex.*" And Peter Gowan a local resident against expansion thinks "*Stansted has always been an airport in the countryside which respects the countryside, but what they are considering would rape this rural neighbourhood,*"

The reason why the second runway is needed is its growing so quick that it needs to do something to cope with it in the future. Stansted has grown rapidly; handling 19m passengers in 2003 compare to 7m in 1998 and the number of passengers using South East airports increased from 70m in 1992 to 118m in 2002

There is growing pressure on the Government to tackle the enormously damaging impacts of aviation on climate change at a time when industry and individuals are being asked to cut their use of fossil fuels to reduce the nation's carbon footprint. Aviation is the fastest growing source of the emissions that contribute to global warming, exacerbated by their release at altitude which makes them almost twice as damaging as on the ground.

Stansted Airport in Essex is regarded by central government as a possible for future airport expansion around London. Expansion at Heathrow would be costly and extremely unpopular, and expansion at Gatwick is prohibited by law before 2020. A new runway at City Airport is impossible, and would be difficult at Luton. However, the government

believes that demand for air travel from London will increase rapidly, and therefore new runway capacity is needed within one or two decades.

A second runway at Stansted would allow the airport to handle more passengers than Heathrow does at present - up to 80 million per annum - as well as a large increase in freight traffic.

A new terminal and significant new access infrastructure would be required for any of the four runway options proposed by BAA. New capacity would also have to be created for surface access to an airport that is served quite poorly compared to Heathrow or Gatwick.

As with all such expansions, the prospect of a new runway at Stansted has provoked fierce opposition from local authorities (Uttlesford District Council).

Perhaps more surprising is the high-profile opposition of Stansted-based airline Ryanair. This is because large increases on landing fees would be needed to pay for the runway and associated construction, which could run into billions of pounds. Ryanair believe that growth of low-cost air travel from London is peaking, and new capacity at Stansted is not necessary.

British Airways also object to the Stansted expansion, primarily because BAA, the owners and operators of Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, would probably need to use profits from Heathrow (a significant proportion coming from British Airways) to cross-subsidise new construction at Stansted - a prospect airlines at Heathrow are unhappy about.

A number of arguments have been brought forward to combat expansion at Stansted, other than the obvious environmental issues. Firstly, as previously mentioned, a massive and expensive new surface infrastructure would be required.

Locals are also very concerned that since unemployment is very low in this area, large quantities of new housing will be required for the new staff the airport will require.

The loss of 29 listed buildings and 2 ancient monuments is also of concern to heritage groups, whilst the expansion of the airport boundaries would encompass the villages of Bamber's Green, Molehill Green and Broxted Hill.