

To: Department for Transport night.flights@dft.gov.uk.

Date: 21 May 2024

Re: Your consultation on proposals for the next night flight regime for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports

From: Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council, Essex (about 8 miles from Stansted Airport and under airport flight paths).

We have looked at your documents on gov.uk concerning restrictions from October 2025 and wish to make the following comments in relation to **Stansted Airport** in particular. Our councillors and residents have direct personal experience over many years of the effect of the night flight restrictions currently in operation.

In summary, the parish council believes the restrictions outlined in Option 3 in the consultation paper should be chosen. Therefore controls for the night quota period should remain. We note this is the government's proposal and we agree with the rationale for this.

Please also note that:

1. Night flights are the biggest single cause of noise complaints by local residents.
2. It has been pointed out many times over the years that night flights are particularly intrusive in a largely rural area, like our parish, which has low background night noise levels. The airport should be required to phase out night flights by 2030, given recent research and knowledge about the harmful effect of noise on residents.
3. The limit on the number of night flights should apply from 11pm to 7.00am and not just for the 6½ hours (11.30pm to 6.00am) period when the limit on the number of night flights currently applies.
4. Airport management should not be able to grant 'dispensations' where flights are delayed by weather or Air Traffic Control problems. This is unfair as it bypasses the process of scrutiny and decision-making by regulators. We are advised that Stansted Airport granted 1,200 dispensations last summer whereas Heathrow granted only 462.
5. Using reverse thrust on landing increases noise levels and should be banned except in an emergency. The Stansted runway is one of the longest in the UK and so the additional braking effect provided by using reverse thrust upon landing is unnecessary other than in exceptional circumstances.

6. Since the recent change to air traffic control routings in the area, when take-offs are to the North (Runway 04), planes are crossing Great Easton and Tilty in particular over more densely populated areas at a lower altitude, creating a louder noise profile than in the past. Residents are already experiencing more disruption than in the past.
7. If more night flights are allowed, and this results in more flights in total, this will make it harder to achieve national targets on reducing emissions and reducing air pollution. Air quality is poor near the airport and in local villages despite the lack of urban development.
8. The negative health impacts from night flights on the local communities around the airport outweigh any perceived economic benefit. It should be clear from the government's experience of recent years that damage to health has serious economic impacts in itself. We understand that the Government accepts that aircraft noise at night has negative effects on physical and mental well-being. If warnings from the World Health Organisation and other respected bodies continue to be ignored, the government may be negligently allowing harm to people who may in future look to it for compensation.

In trying to persuade the government to dismantle the night flights restrictions, Stansted Airport management is breaking its planning agreement with UDC. Its existence and expansion has been allowed on the basis that it will be a good neighbour. Abandoning its commitment to refrain from requesting more night flights is not neighbourly behaviour.

Thank you for your attention to these comments, which we hope will be taken into account.

Yours faithfully

Kate Rixson, Clerk, on behalf of Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council