



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Geoff Hoon MP  
Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DR

26 March 2009

Dear Geoff

I am writing to you to ask you to abandon the Public Inquiry into plans for a second runway at Stansted.

As you know, the Competition Commission has recently ruled that BAA will have to sell two airports, including Stansted. I believe this provides a major opportunity to rethink a decision which is environmentally disastrous and economically unnecessary – especially since it remains unclear whether any new owner will even wish to continue with a second runway and passenger demand at Stansted has fallen by 20% over the past two years.

Aviation is responsible for 12.4% of the UK's contribution to climate change already and it remains the fastest growing source of UK emissions. It is surely misguided to continue to allow carbon emissions from aviation to grow unchecked while the rest of the economy, including the wider business sector, is expected to reduce emissions drastically. Furthermore, expanding overall aviation capacity means ever greater disruption to people's daily lives as the number of flights grows – seemingly, local residents do not count in BAA's calculations.

The 'predict and provide' approach to aviation has been proven to be a failure – we do have to ask where the endpoint is, both in terms of the impact on people's lives and in terms of the environmental impact. Our focus should now be on investing in high-speed rail and reducing the demand for aviation. I hope you will accept the case for scrapping plans for a new runway – for the sake of the environment and of local residents.

Nick Clegg MP