

## **Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

### **Applications by London Ashford Airport Ltd**

#### **APP/L2250/V/10/2131934 & APP/L2250/V/10/2131936**

#### **Site at London Ashford Airport Limited, Lydd, Romney Marsh, TN29 9QL**

CPRE/04/C –Quality of Life

Statement by Mr Paul Black

- 1.1 My name is Mr Paul Black and I am the Chairman of the Board of Governors at Greatstone Primary School.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Greatstone Primary School is a Foundation School with twelve classes and three hundred and sixty pupils. Our well maintained rural school is set in large, open grounds, close to the sandy beach of the south east coast of Romney Marsh.
- 2.2 Greatstone Primary School has recently undergone an OFSTED Inspection and the results showed that we are proud to be one of the best primary schools in Kent, we have facilities second to none, we have outdoor sports accessed by the whole Greatstone and Littlestone community, we have a superb relationship with the football community and our school team came second place in the all England championships, all this will be put in jeopardy should this airport expansion be allowed as we may well lose the use of the field due to noise and air pollution.
- 2.3 Greatstone Nursery is a 52 place purpose built new nursery, which opened in September 2007 under the umbrella of Greatstone Primary School. We have 2 classrooms and currently take children from the age of 2 years until school starting age. We operate sessional and full day care and follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The nursery currently employs 10 staff on a full and part-time basis, these being a team leader, deputy team leader, a room leader, nursery assistants and an administrator.
- 2.4 The Nursery was Ofsted inspected in March 2009. The inspectors stated in their report that "Adults continually monitor children's progress and keep parents informed about what their children are doing. Resources are excellent and used well to encourage learning. Children respect one another and behave well".
- 2.5 The Primary School and Nursery source their food and services locally and makes a significant contribution to the local community and economy.

- 2.6 Greatstone Primary School and Nursery are continually developing and the governors at the school appeal to the inspector to consider the education and welfare of the 412 children and the 60 staff, before allowing a runway extension to be built within 600 metres of the school field and classrooms.

### **3 NOISE IMPACTS ON SCHOOL LEARNING AND ACTIVITIES**

- 3.1 At the Spring Term full Governing Body meeting on 8th February 2007 we discussed an agenda item entitled;-
- “ To consider the possible effects of the proposed runway extension by London Ashford Airport on the quality of education at Greatstone School”*
- 3.2 Greatstone Primary school lies at the end of Baldwin Road and will be within 600 metres of the new runway (see Figure 1), the governors considered many points raised and there was lively and constructive debate which eventually concluded in a unanimous proposal that;-
- 3.3 The Governing Body wish to express their deepest concerns to Shepway District Council that the quality of education at Greatstone Primary School will certainly be affected by any expansion of the airport, due to the following reasons.
- 3.3.1 The increased noise levels as proved by the trial flight in 2007 will make outside lessons in the playground or school field very difficult, It will be much harder for the children to hear instructions or to concentrate.
- 3.3.2 The aircraft will cause excited distractions and could also present the staff with a health and safety issue when controlling and supervising children.
- 3.3.3 It is a real possibility that outside lessons and field studies would have to be removed from the school’s curriculum due to the reasons stated above.
- 3.3.4 There will be (an increased) health hazard to staff and children due to increased pollution from jet engines being blown towards the school grounds in the prevailing winds.
- 3.3.5 There is no mitigation plan in place to protect the school against any detrimental effects that the expansion will bring. There has been no study or survey done within the school grounds to establish a base line against which to compare government statistics.
- 3.3.6 Neither the Headteacher nor the Governing Body has ever been contacted by the airport or Shepway District Council to ask or discuss our concerns about the expansion and its effects on the people/pupils and staff at Greatstone Primary School.
- 3.3.7 The S106 notes that, once passenger numbers exceed 300,000 per annum secondary double glazing will be provided in our classrooms. I thank the applicant for that but had they visited the school they would have been shown the new double glazed units the school had fitted several years ago.
- 3.3.8 We are seriously concerned that the expansion of the airport operations will put the viability and pupil intake of the school and nursery at risk, threatening 60 direct jobs.
- 3.4 With reference to the Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd Report of 2006, page 330, Chapter 16

Noise and vibration section 16.4.11 noise impact measurements were reported to have been taken at Greatstone Primary School, this is in fact untrue as the measurements were taken at Position P5, which (when explained Position P5) lies at the end of Baldwin Road, outside the schools boundaries, so no base line assessment has taken place at Greatstone School either inside or outside the classrooms.

- 3.5 Again with reference to Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd Report 2006, page 331, Chapter 16 Noise and vibration, section 16.5.8 Parsons Brinckerhoff are suggesting that Greatstone Primary School lies on the 45dB (A) contour. They also state “This indicates a marginal increase in noise levels is likely at this location”. Bearing in mind there has been no baseline assessment at the school this is hard to determine, however a number of published papers have investigated the possible detrimental effects of aircraft noise on children’s education.

## **4 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The close proximity of the school, and nursery, to the end of the extended runway, means that staff and children will almost certainly be impacted and the quality of learning and outdoor activities, in the particular, will decline. This should be a serious ground for refusing the airport expansion applications.

Figure 1: Greatstone Primary School in relation to the LAA runway extension

