

**DRAFT HOLDING RESPONSE FROM SMPC**  
**TO LETTER DATED 5/7/18 FROM STANSTED AIRPORT LTD TO UDC**  
**RE PLANNING APPLICATION UTT/18/0460/FUL**

In the letter to Uttlesford District Council dated 5 July 2018 Stansted Airport Ltd (“STAL”) relies heavily on the government’s policy statement “Making Best Use of Existing Runways” published in June 2018 to justify its planning application. However, it is far from clear that the latest policy statement from the government does in fact provide support for this planning application as claimed by STAL.

The application is for an increase in the passenger cap from 35 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 43 mppa, but importantly it also seeks permission for new infrastructure in the form of taxiways and aircraft stands. The effect of this infrastructure, if approved, would be to increase the capacity of the existing runway to handle additional flights in the future.

The June policy statement says that *“the government is supportive of airports beyond Heathrow making best use of their existing runways”*. It absolutely does not say that the government supports additions to infrastructure to increase the capacity of existing runways. In fact, it says precisely the opposite. The policy statement explicitly refers to airports making more intensive use of their existing infrastructure. There is an important distinction to be made here between “making best use of existing runways” and “increasing the capacity of existing runways”.

There is no justification whatsoever for STAL seeking to extend government policy to cover additional infrastructure in this way. In paragraph 1.26 of the policy statement the government makes it clear what it means by making best use of existing runways by referring only to increases in *“either the passenger or air traffic movement caps”*. There is no mention anywhere of additional infrastructure.

Furthermore, if, as STAL claims in its planning application, the proposed increase in the passenger cap can be achieved without any increase in the existing air traffic movement cap, then there should be no requirement for any additional infrastructure. The current air traffic movement cap of 264,000 per annum was approved by the government in 2008 on the basis that it did not need any additional infrastructure. It follows therefore that, as the requested increase in the passenger cap requires neither an increase in the air traffic movement cap nor any additional infrastructure, the only possible explanation for the extra taxiways and aircraft stands is to provide a basis for further expansion beyond 43 mppa and 264,000 air traffic movements. STAL should be asked to publish details of what the real capacity of the airport would be in terms of passenger numbers and air traffic movements if the additional infrastructure were to be approved.

It is evident from this analysis that STAL's planning application as it stands falls outside the scope of current government policy and is therefore beyond the competence of the local planning authority to determine it. It is accordingly the judgement of Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council that this planning application should immediately be referred to national government for determination.