

Press Release: Monday, December 24th, 2007

British Energy Objects to Lydd Airport's Expansion

LAAG welcomes British Energy's decision to object to the large scale development of Lydd Airport. British Energy believes the site is very important to the UK today and into the next century, highlighting the site's existing importance in providing 30% of the electricity needed to serve the southeast of England, the 3.4m tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions it saves annually and the sites potential for new nuclear build which will help guarantee the UK's future energy needs. British Energy is concerned that certain issues associated with the risk of aircraft hazard could compromise both the existing power station and the future of the site. Dungeness is amongst the top 4 sites for a new nuclear build programme which the government is expected to confirm early in the New Year.

LAAG is pleased that common sense has prevailed as the action group believes that regional airports should not be built close to nuclear power stations as the risk of aircraft crash damage is too great. The consulting engineers Large & Associates estimated for the expansion to 500,000 passengers per annum (ppa) at Lydd Airport that the overall risk of a commercial airliner accidentally crashing onto the Dungeness Nuclear Power Plant site was 14.5X higher than the acceptable risk guideline imposed by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII) in order to maintain the nuclear safety case, and at 2,000,000 ppa, 24.4X higher.

LAAG believes Lydd Airport's expansion plans should be abandoned.

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Notes to Editors:

- (1) LAAG is an action group formed in August 2004 to oppose the large scale development of Lydd Airport. LAAG has 2850 active members and is supported by the RSPB, who have described the development as ludicrous, and CPRE Kent who maintain that the airport could not have chosen a worse site.
- (2) Lydd Airport submitted a planning application for a 444m extension to its runway and a new Terminal in December 2006 - planning applications Y06/1647/SH & Y06/1648/SH. After two lengthy consultations during 2007 Shepway District Council now believes the planning application is ready for determination. The planning application will be determined by full council on January 30th, 2008.
- (3) LAAG believes the Environmental Statements backing the planning application remain inadequate, despite the supplementary information provided by Lydd Airport in October 2007. The action group and its consultants believe key information is incorrect and crucial information remains outstanding.