Biggin Hill Airport

Request to vary the terms of their lease

Biggin Hill Airport Limited (BHAL) has a 125 year lease from Bromley Council which restricts the operational hours and the number of flights in and out of Biggin Hill, and prohibits commercial fare-paying passenger services. For some considerable time BHAL has repeatedly tried to get a number of the restrictions removed.

It has now applied for temporary changes to operational hours and flight restrictions during the time of the 2012 Olympic Games. The main changes proposed are: i) to increase the opening hours, on weekdays from 06.30 to 23.00 (currently to 22.00) and at weekends from 06.30 to 23.00 (currently 09.00 to 20.00), and ii) a change on the ban on fare-paying passengers for air taxi users.

Impact on Chislehurst.

Chislehurst lies under the flight path (as do Princess Royal and Queen Mary Hospitals) and together with other areas of Bromley residents of Chislehurst will be particularly affected by the increase in aircraft traffic in operational hours, and in particular by increase in noise and air pollution. It is vitally important therefore that residents are properly informed of, and consulted upon, any proposal that could have a longer term effect.

Precedent for future changes.

The proposal to change the hours may not in itself appear too much of a problem for a short period, particularly for a once-in-a-lifetime event such as the Olympics. Nevertheless, it will increase traffic and noise levels late at night and early in the morning over Chislehurst.

The proposal to allow fare-paying passengers is in our view a more substantial change, enabling a much wider range of aircraft operations, and likely to result in much more traffic and larger aircraft.

If we could be assured that these changes were purely temporary, and had no longer term implications, fewer people would object. However some people have real
people with experience of dealing with BHAL believe this is part of the reason for these proposed changes.

**How to respond.**
If you are concerned, you should write as soon as possible to Cllr. Julian Benington, Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH. Cllr. Benington is the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation who is dealing with BHAL’s request. **You have until 18 February to submit your views.**

A specimen letter is attached below. It is recommended that you personalize the letter to make it more of your own. If you are aware of other Chislehurst Society members in your area or indeed any local resident who would be interested, please pass this note on to them. You should also to copy any letter of objection to your local MP and Councillor. Their details are set out below.

The Chislehurst Society Executive Committee discussed this matter at its January meeting last week, and we are in discussion with other interested groups. We will be submitting our own observations before the deadline.

**Specimen letter**
(Make sure to add your name and full address)

Renewal and Recreation
Airport Consultation
Bromley Council
Bromley Civic Centre
Stockwell Close
Bromley
BR1 3UH
For the attention of Cllr. Julian Benington

____February 2011

Dear Sirs,
I would like to register my opposition to the Proposals made by Biggin Hill Airport Ltd. to vary temporarily during the Olympic Games in 2012 certain terms of the existing arrangements with Bromley Council, including extending opening hours and allowing a change of the ban on fare paying passenger flights.

Yours sincerely

**Contact Details**

**MP:**
the Rt. Hon. Bob Neill, MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA or e-mail: neillb@parliament.uk

**Ward councillors:**
Eric Bosshard (Eric.Bosshard@bromley.gov.uk),
Katy Boughey (Katy.Boughey@bromley.gov.uk),
Ian Payne (Ian.Payne@bromley.gov.uk),
Roger Charsley (Roger.Charsley@bromley.gov.uk) and Charles Rideout (Charles.Rideout@bromley.gov.uk).
(All at Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH)

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**Chislehurst Road Bridge**
You will be aware that the bridge over the railway line on Chislehurst Road is weak, and weight restrictions are in force. We have received the following information from Bromley Council about plans for a new bridge:

- Plans to build a new bridge have been developed for some while and a design for a proposed new bridge has been produced. The new bridge will comprise steel beams, high containment parapets and a GRP enclosure to the supporting beams.
- An exercise has been undertaken to select suitably qualified contractors to undertake demolition of the existing bridge and rebuilding of the new structure.
- The current programme indicates a start on site in October 2011 with completion in April 2013, however the start date is subject to receipt of confirmation of funding from Transport for London.
- The road will need to be closed to vehicular traffic for the majority of this construction programme, however the intention is to maintain pedestrian access throughout the demolition/reconstruction period with the exception of certain activities where it would be too dangerous to allow pedestrian use. In particular this would be when heavy loads were being lifted and is likely to be restricted to certain night times only.
- The diversion route will be the same as exists currently for buses and heavier vehicles i.e. using Leesons Hill, Sevenoaks Road/Cray Avenue and Poverest Road.

If you wish to express your views, please contact your Councillor and MP (details on this page) or contact:

**Lisa Allen, Team Leader - Traffic, Transport and Highways Division, Civic Centre, Bromley BR1 3UH, Email: lisa.allen@bromley.gov.uk**

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**Chislehurst Library**
Following the publication of Bromley Council’s proposed budget changes, it is clear that there is a threat of closure of public libraries. We had previously been informally advised that Chislehurst Library would not be closed, but there are rumours that this may yet happen.

We are fully aware of the need for Bromley Council to reduce spending, and that some difficult decisions have been and will need to be made. However, our library is a public amenity under the stewardship of the Council, and we do not believe it is acceptable for decision to be made on closure without proper consultation with users and local of residents.

The Society is writing to the Council and our Councillors asking them to confirm that before any decision is taken, proper consultation will be undertaken, and alternative plans considered.

If you feel the same, or wish to express any views on this or other local matters, please contact your ward councillor (details on this page).