

Project LLA Consultation
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Please reply to:
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Central Bedfordshire Council response to London Luton airport Consultation

London Luton Airport revised Masterplan

Central Bedfordshire Council supports the proposed improvements outlined in the London Luton Airport's revised masterplan. In particular, we welcome the predicted employment and business opportunities as well as improvements to airport access routes, public transport enhancement and improved opportunity to travel. However, there are concerns which need to be resolved during the planning application stage.

These concerns are related to;

- a) The impact of additional traffic on the surrounding road network

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- b) Negative effect of increased aircraft movement on wellbeing of the residents particularly those who live directly under the flight path.
- c) Airports have a far greater impact on surrounding area than any other major infrastructure. For this reason, affected local authorities particularly those close to the airport should be given real opportunities to influence the decisions made and try to ensure that interest of their residents and businesses are taken into consideration. (Statutory Consultant role is not sufficient in these cases)
- d) During the term of the Airport operators' contract, it may be possible to increase the passenger through put beyond the 18 mppa without having to make any substantive changes to the structure of the airport. For this reason it may be sensible to include an 18 mppa ceiling as part of the planning conditions

As a general comment, we would like to draw your attention to the following points:

- Comparing aircraft noise in 2025 with the proposed development and that without the development, may not be the best indicator of the 'worst case scenario' The pattern of increase number of flights, and aircraft improvement may produce one or more years when the increase in aircraft noise may be worse than that of 2025. This needs to be carefully and clearly established
- The increase or reduction in the number of night flights, as opposed to the proportion needs to be clearly determined.

Matters of particular concern to the residents and businesses of Central Bedfordshire:

a) Aircraft noise disturbance

- Strategic Noise Maps, Noise Contours and other relevant technical data are useful; however, what is important is how, and to what extent, the noise disturbance affects a specific community.
- We are mindful of the Government's aim to limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise. However DEFRA Guidance recognises that there will be occasions where this policy may conflict with the

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measures to protect quiet areas. The region of Central Bedfordshire affected by the activities of London Luton Airport is largely rural with low background noise and therefore relatively tranquil. Any additional noise will be more noticeable and disruptive than that within an area with higher background noise. This needs to be taken into account when resources are allocated to mitigate the effect of disturbance from aircraft noise.

- Most flights in and out of the airport have some effect on one or more parts of the region. However, noise from landing aircraft during airport's easterly operations is the greatest source of concern, particularly for people living under the flight path in south west central Bedfordshire. Hence we consider that introduction of aircraft noise monitoring systems within these communities could help keep the effect of noise from those aircrafts in check.
- In addition to the above, the part of Central Bedfordshire most affected by the operations of the airport lies almost entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the aircraft noise problem within the Chiltern AONB extends beyond the boundary of Central Bedfordshire. As such the Council expects the airport to explicitly address the problem of noise created by aircrafts which overfly the Chiltern AONB

b) Surface access, traffic and transport

- Impact of additional trips to and from the airport on the surrounding road network, public transport, Luton Parkway stations and walking and cycling routes has to be very carefully considered to ensure that solutions are available and these are fully in place at the time when they are needed. Recently constructed Luton Dunstable Busway could make a major contribution to the improvement of access to the airport and the employment and business areas in the vicinity of the airport. This needs to be carefully assessed and plans put in place to take full advantage of this resource.
- Central Bedfordshire and Luton Transport Model (2012) is a useful tool to assess the impact of the airport traffic on local and the wider road network. Central Bedfordshire Council is happy to discuss arrangements for the use of this Model.
- Increased passenger numbers will result in demand for additional car parking spaces; this together with the limited space within the airport boundary could result in demand for additional off-site car parking within Central Bedfordshire. The likelihood and impact of off-site parking facilities needs to be carefully considered

c) Landscape and biodiversity

The Council welcomes the landscape and visual survey that will be taken to help inform the design; the choice of materials for the car park will also be crucial to help mitigate its impact in the views from the surrounding countryside, which includes high quality sites important for recreation and cultural heritage. Sympathetic on site treatments e.g. the use of sustainable drainage and appropriate restoration of grassland margins will also help to safeguard wildlife habitat.

Yours faithfully

Manouchehr Nahvi