

21<sup>st</sup> August 2023

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I strongly oppose the proposal to expand Luton Airport currently under consideration.

I would like to express my concerns based on the aspects identified in a statement of the principal issue from The Planning Inspectorate:

*“The overarching principal issue is whether the **need** for the Proposed Development and any **socioeconomic and other benefits** that the Proposed Development would deliver would be outweighed by any **adverse effects on the environment and living conditions.**”*

**Need:** There is no need for this expansion; it is driven by the desire for more profit by the airport. The capacity for a higher numbers of air travellers will create a supply which will be taken up by travellers responding to the availability of cheap flights. There is no need to create the demand. In the longer term, as the global climate crisis worsens, there should be a long term reduction in the number of people wanting to take flights which are not environmentally friendly. Fuel price rises in response to environmental issues will in time naturally curb demand. The perceived “need” for this expansion is therefore fundamentally flawed.

**Socioeconomic Benefits:** The increase in the number of jobs generated by the scheme is pitiful in comparison to the number of lives adversely affected daily and on a permanent basis. There are headlines in the proposals about jobs, sustainability, social impact, financial compensation and so on, but these are just trying to make it sound palatable. The fact is that this development is hugely damaging and negative. Its real impacts cannot be countered by giving to charity under its “Community First” aspirations or offering compensation. It would be far better to use all the money for the expansion to invest locally in green technologies or tackling local poverty. Putting the Community First in this way would have the support of the local population, and the Council would be seen to be progressive and forward thinking, not investing in projects that are based on out-dated thinking and that are actually harmful to the area and its community, whilst trying to appear beneficial.

**Adverse effects on the environment:** At a time when everyone on the planet is concerned by global warming, an expansion such as this is going in completely the wrong direction and totally ignoring the most important issue the planet has ever faced. The environmental impact of the increased flights is very concerning in terms of the increased use of fossil fuels and carbon footprint. The air quality in the area is already affected by air travel and will become significantly worse under the proposals. The UK is already seeing a decline in the number of wildlife species able to survive in a world dominated by humans. This proposal does little to alleviate the pressure on the wildlife which shares our environment. Providing space to replace natural areas that are sacrificed to the expansion does not mean that there will be timely replacement of habitat of equivalent quality and diversity, which can take many years to develop.

**Adverse effects on living conditions:**

**Noise Impact:** I have already noticed a dramatic increase in aircraft noise over the last 12-18 months, with larger, noisier aircraft being used which fly closer to and over our house. It is now

increasingly intrusive, particularly whilst working at home or relaxing in the garden. I am already noticing more noisy flights starting early in the morning and going on till late at night, which makes sleeping with the window open difficult. The proposed expansion will make the situation unbearable. The increased number of flights planned per day will inevitably mean a larger number of delayed flights flying after 23:00. It is extremely unlikely that noise levels will be mitigated by quieter aircraft as claimed by the proposals - the actual predicted improvements due to better engine technology are marginal and it will take a long time for any newer aircraft to replace the current fleets. Noise will only be reduced with new airplanes, which will only be phased in as old planes need replacing. Recent additions to the fleets will not be replaced for 20-25 years at least.

**Impact on road travel:** Traffic in the area is already at full capacity - the M1 and surrounding roads often painfully slow at peak times and the slightest incident brings everything to a standstill. The increased number of journeys in the area will make car travel intolerable - the idea that travellers will use public transport is at best wishful thinking.

**Impact on lives:** The impact of noise and increased traffic on mental health, and the impact of lower air quality on physical health will be borne by the local population and ultimately the NHS, paid for by the taxpayer, not those that seek to profit from this expansion.

In summary there are so many adverse effects of this proposal that massively outweigh any perceived need or pitiful benefits that may be claimed. Please do not let this expansion go ahead.

Thank you for reading my submission.

Regards

Mr N Oliver