



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Louise Haigh MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
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The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP
Secretary of State for Levelling
Up, Housing and Communities
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
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8 July 2024

Ref: DC37749

Dear Secretaries of State,

Imminent government decision on proposed expansion of Luton Airport

Congratulations on your general election victory and your Ministerial appointments.

One of the first decisions you may be asked to take in your new positions, is whether to permit large scale expansion of Luton Airport – effectively almost doubling the capacity, from 19 million to 32 million passengers per year.

We urge you in the strongest possible terms to reject it.

Advice from the Climate Change Committee is clear: “no airport expansions should proceed until a UK-wide capacity management framework is in place to assess annually and, if required, control sector CO2 emissions and non-CO2 effects”.

Advice to the last government from the Climate Change Committee in September 2019 was explicit, that not only is aviation likely to be the largest emitter of CO2 by 2050, but that relative emissions from aviation can only be reduced by around 20% using fuel efficiency measures. As such, this 77% increase to Luton Airport’s capacity – which this proposal would deliver – is contrary to the UK’s obligation to reach Net Zero by 2050.

The previous Conservative administration had effectively junked any real commitment to reaching Net Zero by ignoring expert climate advice on aviation. This decision will be the first test of an incoming Labour government’s commitment to putting the UK back on the road to Net Zero. We hope very much that you will refuse this application, having considered the impacts of aviation emissions on climate change.

At the same time, we want you to be aware that this proposal is also actively opposed by the county council and a number of district councils in Hertfordshire, not least due to the harmful impacts of aircraft noise already blighting communities across the county.

Luton Airport had already breached their aircraft noise limits for three consecutive years up to 2019. Promises of quieter aircraft have failed to materialise, and the new A321neo aircraft are considered on some measures to be actually making the noise impact on our communities worse. Instead of rectifying the noise pollution, Luton Airport simply applied to regularise the noise limits in 2021 instead – an application rubber stamped by Luton Council who are the ultimate financial beneficiaries from the income generated by the airport. Luton Airport simply can't be trusted to deliver on their promises.

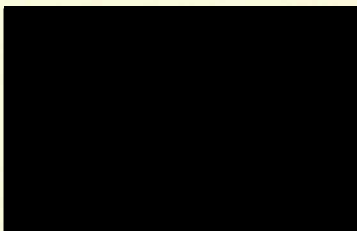
Conservative Ministers even scrapped the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise, nominally transferring the aircraft noise responsibilities to the Civil Aviation Authority who have been clear that they have no capacity to undertake noise related investigations.

For the sake of our climate, and the quality of life of our constituents who suffer from the increased noise living under the flight paths, we urge you to reject Luton Airport expansion plans.

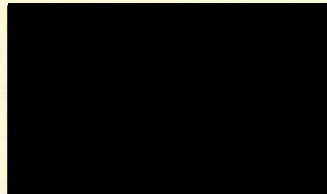
Should you be minded to approve the application, we would request that you agree to an urgent Ministerial surgery so we can make the case against Luton Airport expansion to you in person, before you take a final decision.

We look forward to working with you in your new roles.

Yours sincerely,



Daisy Cooper MP
Member of Parliament for
St Albans



Victoria Collins MP
Member of Parliament for
Harpenden and Berkhamsted