

From The Harpenden Society

**Project LLA Consultation,
LLAOL,
Navigation House,
Airport Way,
Luton LU2 9LY**

23 April 2012

Dear Sir,

Project London Luton Airport Development Plan

I am writing on behalf of the Harpenden Society, the town's longstanding civic society with over 1000 members. While we recognise the benefits Luton airport provides for a significant number of our residents we object to the sheer scale of the proposed expansion and the lack of consideration of the necessary infrastructure development that would be required to make it feasible

Overall we believe that the airport site and surrounding infrastructure, however much improved, is unsuitable for the scale of development proposed. Unlike the larger operations at Stansted, Gatwick and, of course, Heathrow, the natural constraints surrounding Luton airport mean that it could never deliver the scale and quality of transport access and other facilities required by the envisaged increased number of passengers.

Specifically our concerns are as follows:

1. Infrastructure and services around the airport

The site is very restricted by its topography with limited scope for development. Access relies entirely on road transport. There are already long queues at peak times and facilities for passenger unloading are very poor. Access from Luton Parkway is by bus only. There is no mention in the plan of improved rail access to the terminal, which is needed irrespective of any expansion.

2. Road congestion:

Both the A1081 through Harpenden High Street and the B653 through Batford are already heavily congested. In spite of the proposed road development in the immediate area of the airport and its terminal and from the M1, there will inevitably be greater pressure on the A1081 and B653.

3. Aircraft noise:

Published noise reports from the airport show that even now around 1000 individual noise complaints are made each year (far more last summer when an attempt to "tweak" one of the flight paths made matters worse, so illustrating the near-impossibility of threading aircraft between a series of closely located communities without causing at least some disturbance somewhere). As to Harpenden itself, during broadly easterly winds (in practice from north round to south east) the main departure route westwards brings ex-

Luton aircraft immediately over the central/south part of the town, both day and night, and creates a great deal of disturbance to many residents - as witnessed by the many noise complaints logged at the airport. With the wind broadly westerly, the "Dover" route takes the planes round and partly across the south west corner of the town. The increase in flight numbers proposed would plainly exacerbate the damaging effect of annoyance during the day and sleep-disturbance at night.

Before we could entertain supporting even modest expansion of the airport we would need concrete assurances on

1. aircraft routing avoiding Harpenden backed up by publicly accountable penalties for non-compliance.
2. investment in infrastructure, including detailed surveys of airport traffic using the A1081 and B653 with appropriate plans for amelioration.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Marsden
Chairman, The Harpenden Society