

Preston Parish Council

Keepers Cottage, Whitehall Lane, Kings Walden, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 8JZ

Tel: 01438 871103 / 07887 875442 Email: prestonclerk@gmail.com

Luton Rising
Hart House Business Centre
Kimpton Road
Luton
LU2 0LA

Wednesday 30 March 2022

Dear Sir / Madam

Luton Rising Public Consultation March 2022

Preston Parish Council objects to the proposals put forward in the Luton Rising Consultation to increase the capacity of the airport to 32 million passengers per year by building a new terminal and making the best use of the existing runway for the following reasons:

Climate Change: The huge rise in passenger numbers proposed for Luton would increase rather than reduce the carbon footprint of the airport, as well as the surrounding area, in every aspect. Loss of green space, the impact of construction works, more traffic, greater use of water which is already a scarce resource and increased use of energy are some key concerns. This proposal will not meet local and national targets for net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Impact on Communities: The quality of life in Hertfordshire has already been degraded by the numbers of arriving and departing flights at Luton airport. Even with mitigation measures in place to minimise noise, pollution and light pollution, with the increased number of flights these aspects would continue to have an adverse impact on Hertfordshire residents causing loss of sleep and other negative health effects which have an impact on people's wellbeing.

Wigmore Valley Park: While we acknowledge that plans include the retention of as much of Wigmore Valley Park as possible and the provision of an additional 10% of parkland we object to the proposal because overall a large amount of green space will be permanently destroyed to the detriment of the local and wider community. A 10% biodiversity net gain will not fully compensate for the irretrievable damage which will be caused to an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Road Infrastructure: We realise that this proposal plans to increase the number of passengers using public transport to get to the airport but we would like to point out that east-west transport links are poor in comparison to north-south routes which include arriving and departing by train, with the possibility of linking in from the Oxford-Cambridge Arc when it is completed.

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We note that 2016 data shows that 9% of airport traffic used the A505. This road is gridlocked at peak times which results in many vehicles travelling through Preston as a short cut to avoid the queues. Preston is a small village with very narrow lanes which were not built to withstand the current amount of traffic, let alone the increase which the proposed expansion of passenger numbers would create. This would further damage and erode the lanes and have a detrimental effect on the daily lives of local people. The position of the proposed Terminal 2 at Wigmore Valley Park means access would be easier from the rural lanes and villages than from the main roads through Hitchin and Luton and this is not acceptable.

Three road junctions in Hitchin are identified for minor improvements in the proposal: A602 Park Way / Upper Tilehouse Street roundabout, A 602 Park Way / Stevenage Road roundabout and A505 Offley Road/ Pirton Road roundabout, all of which fail to cope with the existing levels of traffic at peak times. There is only space for very limited improvements to these roundabouts which are unlikely to reduce the adverse impact of increased traffic through Hitchin as a result of airport expansion.

Please take these comments into account when considering a formal application for increased passenger numbers and a new terminal building to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Yours faithfully

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Lathane', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Lathane
Clerk to Preston Parish Council