

PRESS RELEASE

Issued by LADACAN, STAQS, HARPENDEN SKY, STAND, SLFFL

For immediate release

LUTON AIRPORT LATEST NOISE BID ‘SHAMEFUL AND UNJUST’

Luton Airport is applying to its owners Luton Borough Council for permission to ignore a key noise planning condition designed to control its overall noise footprint, claiming that “unexpectedly quick” expansion has overtaken noise mitigation. But according to its own published accounts, faster expansion was financially incentivised by LLAL – the company which owns the airport for Luton Council, whose planning rules are supposed to protect residential amenity by controlling noise.

Local residents are furious that rather than regulating its expansion to keep pace with the promised noise mitigations, the airport has given in to commercial pressure from its owners and accelerated the growth. As a result, it is currently flying too many still-noisy aircraft in direct breach of the planning condition, and further eroding quality of life for people in Hertfordshire who have already endured a 90% increase in flights in 5 years.

Andrew Lambourne, speaking for members of the residents’ group LADACAN said “People locally are utterly fed up with the ever-growing impact of Luton aircraft noise on their lives. Planning Conditions were set by Luton Council in December 2013 to regulate the expansion, yet the airport seems to think it can just apply for them to be set aside whenever it wishes. This demonstrates a fundamental contempt for the planning system, which is supposed to achieve a balance between corporate benefit and protection for people on the ground.”

Luton Airport’s description of the environmental impact of setting aside the planning condition has also attracted criticism. Noise expert Paul Flatt has slammed as ‘utterly misleading’ the Airport’s claim that a 1dB LAeq change in a noise contour is ‘negligible’.

Mr Flatt said “The fact that they are trying to pull the wool over our eyes by sleight of hand in this variation request speaks eloquently of their total lack of respect for the community. Breaching a noise contour limit by that amount means you are flying a lot more noisier planes than you are supposed to. The limit was set for a reason: they need to respect it.”

ENDS

Notes for editors:

LADACAN, STAQS (St Albans Quieter Skies), Harpenden Sky, STAND (St Albans Aircraft Noise Defence) and SLFFL (Stop Low Flights From Luton) are campaigning together for reduction in air traffic noise from Luton Airport before any further expansion is permitted.

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