Report to the building inspectorate ref: APP/B0230/V/22/3296455

Luton Rising (Formerly London Luton Airport)

02 May 2022

1. **Pollution and Night Flights:** (Noise and air quality) During the Pandemic there was considerably less air traffic, which allowed us to recall what clearer air was like. The birds and wild life in general was more noticeable. The noise and air traffic now is constant within the traditional operating hours of 6am – 12 midday and again from about 16.00 hrs and midnight. Flights in these times are sometimes as frequent as every 2 minutes. We have flights coming in during the hours of 12 midnight and at least 4 am. Some of these are heavy freight planes (DHL etc). As I write this, last night/morning was particularly busy with at least 10 passenger aircraft and 2 freight flights landing. I appreciate that Luton Rising is not subject to CAA legislation, however these night flights are very disturbing for local residents and antisocial for the travellers.

2. **Debt and unfinished infrastructure:** Previously, perhaps 8 or 9 years ago, this airport was a successful business with approximately 12 million passenger throughput per annum. It had no debt and contributed substantially, to LBC coffers to help with the cost of local council services. The current concessionaires have not contributed anything to the local budget since before the pandemic, leaving LBC in considerable debt. Our council has even made a contribution to Luton Rising, in the region of £170 M. LBC has carried out considerable infrastructure projects in and around the actual airport, funded entirely by our rates. They have half built an overhead railway, and changed many of our local roads, in anticipation of more airport users, incurring many millions of £'s of debt. Luton Rising has not contributed to any of this. The airport management team at Luton Rising, has not kept a lid on the debt, and despite a throughput of (currently) approximately 18 Million Passengers Per Annum (mppa). I know flights and travel have been greatly affected by the shutdown, but flights still left here during the pandemic and many of them were 'ghost' flights. Now, there are flights all the time, and this includes the private sector which seem to have no restrictions on what they do, the noise they make nor the swathes they use.

3. **Inability to expand the taxiway:** The Runway at Luton is directly aligned to the county border with Hertfordshire. As there is no financial benefit for Hertfordshire County Council, they will not allow any expansion, to increase the runway/apron on to HCC land. This effectively limits a second runway from being installed. In consequence I personally believe it to be impossible to increase passenger numbers without increasing potential danger. In peak seasons, aircraft are landing and taking off within a 2 minute window. We have frequently seen aircraft arriving on the landing beacon, get overhead, only to suddenly increase thrust and fly up again to circulate on the holding swathe until they can safely land. Needless to say the thrust is deafeningly loud and frightening. This power surge must surely cause an increase in burnt fossil fuels, greater than a normal landing. This is yet another problem for us all. Luton Borough Council has a statement on their website promising to be a net zero pollutant withing the next 20 years or so. How do they anticipate meeting this target, if they wish to increase passenger numbers to 19mppa by the end of 2022 and then have plans to request increases up to 32mppa by 2040. I am unlikely to still be around at

this time but my children and grandchildren will be, so I have to try and persuade you to cancel any increases in passenger numbers from the 18mppa they currently have approval for. This number has not yet been achieved by the concessionaire, for which I am grateful. The overcrowding in our skies is really alarming.

4. **Overcrowded skies:** Luton airport is in very close proximity to Stansted airport which is only about 30 miles from here as the crow flies. Until recently the two airports shared a holding pattern. This has now been amended, which is a good thing, and our flight swathe has been moved to Northampton skies. The airport is not far from London City airport, and of course London Heathrow and Gatwick are close too. When I look at my computer radar programme the south of England is virtually covered in aircraft. The noise request on this application, has already been implemented as far as I can tell, as well as the increase in times the aircraft can fly, as discussed above. The aircraft are landing and taking off much later than the midnight to 6am period which I have always believed was the approved 'quiet time'. This is in fact a misnomer, as the engines are tested and run causing a constant drone during the night

5. **Finally:** I am concerned that there is a conflict of interest in all of this. How can the LBC planning department vote on the submitted application from Luton Rising when LBC is the owner of the airport, and has a vested interest in trying to make it profitable once again - a bit 'poacher and gamekeeper'? I have doubts that there will ever be much in the way on financial contribution to the council however much they do for the concessionaires. I do not think the interests of Luton Residents are being fairly and robustly considered.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this report. I hope it allows you to see the impact on the members of the public who live in the vicinity of the flight swathes; who have to sit in traffic jams around airport environs; and who have to tolerate constant roadworks around the town. Those of us who pay our rates, yet have no control over how they are spent are not considered and are very frustrated.

Jane Spendley