



Department
for Transport

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Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter of 10 November, about the current airspace change consultation on proposed new flight paths for London Luton Airport (LLA). I am replying as the Minister for aviation. I do apologise for the delay in my response.

Any proposal to change the design of airspace is regulated by the independent Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The CAA has a robust seven stage process (known as CAP1616) which sponsors of airspace change must follow. This process implements the Department for Transport's 2017 airspace and noise policy, which introduced new requirements for options analysis, consultation with those affected, and the need to assess the potential noise impacts of the proposal.

There is a dedicated website for the proposal that includes full details of the proposal, as well as information on how to respond to the consultation, as well as providing the ability to view other responses which have been submitted. This website can be found at: https://consultations.airspacechange.co.uk/london-luton-airport/ad6_luton_arrivals/. I would urge your constituents to respond to this consultation.

When determining whether to approve the LLA proposal, the CAA will consider whether it has met the CAA's regulatory requirements which include the need for the sponsor to respond appropriately to the consultation feedback it received.

Previous engagement on this LLA airspace change proposal was carried out with a representative group of local community stakeholders via London Luton Airport's Noise & Track Sub Committee (NTSC) of its Airport Consultative Committee, which includes members from Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils.

The airport is legally required to provide adequate facilities for consultation with respect to any matter concerning the management or administration of the aerodrome, and the Consultative Committee fulfils this statutory requirement. The Government believes that this is the most appropriate forum for local councils and councillors to have more opportunity to provide recommendations and inputs. Further information regarding the Committee can be found at: www.london-luton.co.uk/corporate/the-llacc

Turning to your question about the ownership of the airport, the Government considers that the ownership of the airport is not an issue which it should be involved in. LLA, although owned by a Local Authority company, is a commercial enterprise and operates in a highly competitive market.

In the broader context, the Government is supportive of airports making best use of their existing runways. However, we recognise that the development of airports can have negative as well as positive local impacts, including on noise levels. In relation to LLA's future plans for growth, the Government considers that a potential airport growth application should be considered under the appropriate planning regime and take careful account of all relevant considerations, particularly the proposal's economic and environmental impacts and proposed mitigations. This approach does not prejudge the decision of those authorities who will be required to give proper consideration to such applications.

I would like to thank you again for writing me regarding LLA and raising these important issues with me. I trust the information in this letter is useful.

Yours sincerely,



ROBERT COURTS MP

MINISTER FOR AVIATION, MARITIME AND SECURITY