

I am a very concerned resident of Dagnall village. Through newspaper articles, Facebook groups etc I have these email addresses although I appreciate you may want to forward to more relevant contacts.

The planning applications by Luton Rising to increase passenger numbers from 18million to 32million a year at Luton airport is cause for huge concern and I object in the strongest terms to this expansion going ahead.

Dagnall is a small village, nestled between Ashridge Forest National Trust and Dunstable Downs NT / Whipsnade Zoo on the edge of the Chilterns. Importantly it is one of the only villages within an area of outstanding natural beauty. Being in an AONB should not result in plane noise and pollution at such a dreadful level even now, before any expansion. And that is day and night - more of which later.

Dagnall has around 500 residents and we are directly on the flight path for Luton Airport arrivals on an easterly approach and can experience an average of 14 planes an hour, often a lot more depending on season. We know we are seven nautical miles out from the runway but I would ask if there any plans to route planes in such a way that they avoid the AONB and our village.

These increased passenger number targets will essentially double the number of air traffic movements each year. This means Dagnall could be looking at an average of 21 flights an hour during the high summer season. It is already difficult to hold a conversation outside when a plane is flying over, but if this was to happen every two minutes it would be horrendous, completely robbing us of our garden amenities and making a travesty of the fact we live in an AONB - which after all is supposed to be tranquil. We are frequently woken by planes when trying to sleep at night, which has a huge impact on our general health and well-being. This impact should be taken into consideration as long term mental health will be affected very badly. I would also question why night time flights are allowed to happen, given the obvious disturbance to sleep that this causes.

And as to the environmental impact, Luton Rising will be increasing pollution in our local area by a huge amount, as well as destroying Wigmore Country Park. We are in the midst of a climate crisis and are supposed to be cutting emissions not increasing them, increasing biodiversity, not reducing it.

Luton Rising have also been very misleading regarding the impact of the new aeroplanes they plan to use. They propose the planes will be much quieter - however all certification of these planes suggest they are only quieter on takeoff and not landing.

Dagnall will be adversely affected by more flights particularly those at night time. I'd like to draw your attention to the noise contour maps Luton Rising refer to in their extensive online documentation. These are somewhat confusing, but essentially Dagnall will find our overall noise increases by a considerable amount more than these maps imply.

I cannot help but think Luton Airport is not best placed to be the subject of any expansion whatsoever, although I do understand it would generate a lot of money for the local council. They are in the strange position of having to reduce emissions and reach green targets whilst owning an airport. Of course they will want to generate as much income as possible through it.

The loss of biodiversity which we have already had in Buckinghamshire due to HS2 and now the Luton Airport proposal - right on the border of Bucks and Herts is horrendous.

Luton Rising also failed to send a leaflet to the Dagnall residents on time last year. This meant that a lot of people missed the opportunity to attend many of the consultation meetings, as they had already happened by the time we received our leaflets.

In 2019 they arranged a meeting in our local Village Hall but the next time they refused to do so saying it was going to be an online consultation, and that we could travel to meetings elsewhere. (Again by this time we had already missed most of the local meetings!)

The village has no public transport and quite an older demographic, many of whom have no internet and no longer drive. We also have some residents who do not run cars due to financial reasons and simply can't make these consultation meetings. It feels rather like we were overlooked even though we are some of the worst affected by all of this.

I urge whoever is responsible in government to do everything in their power to stop this hugely damaging expansion from progressing.