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5th October 2023 (before 23:59)

London Luton Airport Way Luton

By portal upload only to the Planning Inspectorate

My Ref.: F: Planning\Development Management\Luton.

Application by London Luton Airport Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the London Luton Airport Expansion project. Notification of decision to accept an application for Examination for an Order Granting Development Consent

Deadline 3: Action Points issued by the EXa, as may affect the Chilterns Conservation Board. Please note our key points, following the oral hearings, are denoted in boxed text, which includes two key summary tables.

Action 25. Liaise with the Chilterns Conservation Board and councils on content of further assessment being undertaken on the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Action 26. Confirm how achievable it is for the proposed increase in flights to avoid the AONB.

We welcome both action points and set out below a summary of the evidence we would put, in reply to the questions, as set out in the Issue Specific Hearing 6 on 29th September 2023.

Summary of the oral submissions as put by the Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) on 29th September Issue Specific Hearing.

Agenda item (5) Landscape and Visual. We have highlighted our principal areas of interest.

- **Approach to the methodology of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).**

Appropriateness of the photomontages/ visualisations.

- Assessment findings in respect of landscape and visual effects.

- **Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and assessment of Special Qualities.**

- **Effects from lighting.**

- **Suitability of mitigation measures**, the strategic landscape masterplan [APP-172] and the adequacy of Requirement 9 of the draft Development Consent Order (DCO).

1.0. BACKGROUND. The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) has been actively involved in this project/proposal since commenting on the EIA Scoping for the Expansion of London Luton Airport (2019). We are an AONB Conservation Board as constituted by the CROW Act 2000 and included in the list of statutory consultees for NSIP/DCO applications (as set out in the Infrastructure Planning (National Policy Statement Consultation) Regulations (2009), the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations (2009) and the Infrastructure Planning (Interested Parties) Regulations (2010).

1.1. The CCBs scoping points were, in summary, that the decision involves consideration of:

- (1) **Noise** and effects on tranquillity from overflying the Chilterns AONB.
- (2) **Air pollution** and effects on sensitive habitats in the Chilterns including protected sites of national and international importance, including river ecology.
- (3) **Cumulative impacts** from the combined changes in flightpaths from Luton and Heathrow - it is important that in any redesign of flightpaths there is careful design to avoid harm to the tranquillity of the AONB and take all opportunities to reduce noise over the AONB (e.g., the Bovingdon stack).
- (4) People walking, cycling, riding or volunteering in the AONB are likely to be outdoors and **seeking tranquillity**, so are sensitive to noise disturbance and the sight of aircraft flying overhead.
- (5) **Light pollution** from the airport and aircraft overhead affecting the dark night skies of the AONB, which is an intrinsically dark zone, and impacting on people's opportunities to star gaze and experience darkness.
- (6) Identifying opportunities for AONB **mitigation and enhancement**

1.2. We have previously submitted:

- Relevant Representations - Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS) (23rd June 2023) (**ExA reference AS-055**).

2.0. KEY DOCUMENTS TO REFER TO.

2.1. We wish to draw attention to the helpful 'overflying' plans, figures 14.4 to 14.17 in the ES APP-152, superseded by AS-102. These baseline assessments (2019) and overflying projections for phases One, 2(a) and 2(b) are very useful in any discussion of tranquillity, associated with lighting and visual impacts.

2.2. Figure 14.14 provides a baseline of the number of aircraft (2019) per day up to 7,000 ft = **150** per day (7-00 to 23-00) eastward over CCB's AONB candidate land & 10/20 west over the AONB (Bucks direction) & 10/20 north over the AONB (N Herts direction).

Figure 14.15 (phase one) = **150** per day (7-00 to 23-00) eastward over CCB's AONB candidate land & 10/20 west over the AONB (Bucks direction) & 10/20 north over the AONB (N Herts direction).

Figure 14.16 Phase 2 (a) increases to **200** per day eastwards over CCB's AONB candidate land & 10/20 west over the AONB (Bucks direction) & 10/20 north over the AONB (N Herts direction).

14.17 **Phase 2(b)** increases to **350** per day eastwards over CCB's AONB candidate land & 20/50 west over the AONB (Bucks direction) & 10/20 north over the AONB (N Herts direction).

3.0. Agenda Q 1 - Approach to the methodology of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

3.1. The LVIA does not deal with the special qualities of the AONB nor the AONB boundary extension. (ExA reference **APP-091 & 092**, superseded by **AS 086 & AS 087**), **AS-094**.

3.2. We do not question the assessments within the existing AONB. Photomontage viewpoints **1** (Warden Hill), **45** (Ivinghoe Beacon) and **50** (Beech Rd near Kensworth) all deal with the visual impacts of the proposed new buildings/physical infrastructure, not overflying aircraft, as this is a matter for an assessment of tranquillity.

3.3. Commentary at Ivinghoe Beacon deals with the easterly flight path but no judgments are made.

3.4. **AS-086 and AS-087** deal with the landscape and visual consequences. Taking **AS-086**, this notes the sensitivity of receptors to the surrounding footpath network, including to the East (page 42 for example). This is land under the easterly take off (Offley and St Paul's Warden) and within Herts LCA 11 (see page 68), described as '*a gently rolling narrow upland plateau that extends from Little Offley in the north to Crouch Green*'. As a **landscape receptor this is denoted to be of 'medium to high sensitivity'**. At operational stage the effects are that, '*maximum aircraft movement capacity are considered to deteriorate the tranquillity of this LCA to some extent*'. The impact is '**minor adverse**'. **At As-087** on the visual impact at St Paul's Walden (page 34), this is deemed '**negligible adverse, rising to minor adverse**'.

3.5. Page 150 deals with the AONB itself and refers to, '*users of rights of way on or adjoining the flight path within the Chilterns AONB*.' These footpaths are deemed visual receptors of '**high sensitivity**'.

3.6. We need to look at Figures 14.4 to 14.17 in the ES APP-152, superseded by AS-102. The volumes from the west/north appear broadly consistent with the existing baseline (2019) operation.

3.7 Should the CCB's candidate land for AONB review, to the east, become AONB, then the CALIBRATION of sensitivity and thus MAGNITUDE of change requires a re-assessment.

3.8. With the delivery of phases 2 (a) & (b) resulting in 350 daily movements (existing at 150 or fewer) then we submit a re-calibration of impacts is required, before this examination is concluded.

4.0. AGENDA Q3 – Approach to the Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Assessment of Special Qualities (SQs).

4.1. The CCB seeks a re-calibration of landscape sensitivity to the east, but that also requires an assessment of the special qualities (SQs) of the AONB, also dealing with the CCB's promoted candidate land, as the boundary extension is further progressed.

4.2. Natural England, in their response of 22nd August 2023, sought an assessment of the SQs or, rather, the development of a methodology to assess them.

4.3. Linked to this must be a consideration of MITIGATION and if it can be achieved, at all. If not, that finding is material and we would ask that the Examining Authority attribute weight to that.

4.4. Consideration of AESTHETIC and PERCEPTUAL CHARACTERISTICS is key. If tranquillity is to be assessed, it must be assessed against such a baseline. We assume that all parties, including the applicants agree with this point.

TABLE I: KEY POINTS ON AONB BASELINE.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Characteristics are highly material. (cross-reference to the ES Chapter 14 Examination document **APP 040, superseded by AS079**)

A baseline is established in the Environmental Statement, but no AONB assessment methodology is advanced.

Environmental Statement Chapter 14 on landscape and visual matters. APP 040 is superseded by AS079.

The landscape assessment in the ES chapter 14 places great emphasis (which is applied at many points) on an appreciation of the '**aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape within the Chilterns AONB**'. This baseline is applied in Ch 14 at **APP040/AS079 14.9.4 section x 'landscape effects'**, in which such **aesthetic and perceptual characteristics** are deemed potentially sensitive to change, following the airport's expansion.

When dealing with overflying aircraft movements (**APP 040/AS079 at 14.9.20**), *The aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape within the Chilterns AONB, which is a high sensitivity receptor, is judged to experience an impact of **low adverse magnitude** in this assessment Phase 2b period. This is principally due to the noticeable increase in aircraft movements that are anticipated to pass over the AONB below 7,000 ft (AMSL) during this period, associated with an increase from 21.5mppa to **32mppa**. and as identified on Figures 14.14 to 14.17 of this ES [TR020001/APP/5.03], which is judged to **permanently deteriorate the sense of tranquillity perceived by those recreating within the AONB (APP 040/AS 079 at 14.9.22)**, this is calibrated as, '**moderate adverse, likely significant**' effects. The ES accepts, rightly, that these operational effects constitute **permanent, lasting effects, resulting from the increase in aircraft movements**. This increase is calibrated across 3 phases of proposed growth in air traffic movements (21.5 mppa to 2027, 27mppa to 2039 and 32 mppa to 2043). Aesthetic factors cover the appreciation of landscape beauty in the Chilterns and its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.*

APP 040/AS 079 at Table 14.7 sensitivity analysis. The ES methodology accepts that tranquillity is affected when aircraft fly **below a threshold of 7,000 ft**. It is accepted in the ES that (at ES Ch 14 Table 14.7 'sensitivity analysis') next-generation aircraft will result in '**no change**' as to the likely effect when assessing landscape impacts. Our understanding is that most airline operators ask that pilots turn on landing lighting below 10,000 ft. **So the impact is visual – permanently so – and the applicant's accept that technological improvements cannot diminish this.** In the language of the ES the impact will be

'moderate adverse, likely significant' harm and this will be of a long-lasting impact upon the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the AONB.

4.5. The Planning Inspectorate, at the **initial scoping stage**, recommended that:

- (1) The ES assessment **should consider the proposed extension** designation of the AONB and any significant effects that may occur,
- (2) That details should be sought within the **lighting assessment on the impact on dark skies**, to be used in the LVIA and
- (3) That any assessment of the impact on **tranquillity** should include an assessment of the impacts upon the AONB and that
- (4) That there should be a thorough assessment of all mitigation measures

Point (3) is on-going. Natural England critiqued the applicant/promotor's first draft of an AONB appraisal mechanism (London Luton Airport Expansion. Development Consent Order – Chilterns AONB Special Qualities Assessment, Proposed Methodology, 31st July 2023 draft). Natural England welcomed the applicant's 'precautionary approach' to the assessment of the AONB's special qualities.

4.6. The CCB has not been a party to this engagement or dialogue.

5.0. CCB's key points for the consideration of SQs and tranquillity, especially.

5.1. **Overflying** of an AONB is a matter closely observed in the **Civil Aviation Authority's CAP 1616 Guidance** (Airspace change: Guidance on the regulatory process for changing the notified airspace design and planned and permanent redistribution of air traffic, and on providing airspace information. 4th edition, March 2021) and on matters of notified airspace design and the **Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS)**¹ at 5.222 (*Developments outside nationally designated areas which might affect them 5.222 The duty to have regard to the purposes of nationally designated areas also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. The development should aim to avoid compromising the purposes of designation, and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints*).

Figures 14.4 to 14.17 of the original and superseded ES deal with this issue, plotting the **various scenarios** for the overflying of the AONB. These plans are helpful, and we draw attention to them. They do provide an essential baseline, to the benefit of all parties.

5.2. **TRANQUILITY** is an acknowledged feature in the definition of natural beauty when AONBs are designated [Natural England's guidance]. We are mindful that a **boundary extension** of the Chilterns AONB is ongoing, The **CCB in a 2013 report** promoted the land east of Luton for consideration. That point was recognised by PINS in their scoping opinion/consultation. A series of Landscape Character Assessments, to the east, describe the series of ridges and valleys between Luton and Hitchin. **This is a chalk landscape of great natural beauty. In the judgment of the CCB it fulfils a number of the NE's published criteria for natural beauty.**

¹ Airports National Policy Statement: new runway capacity and infrastructure at airports in the South East of England Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 9(8) of the Planning Act 2008 Moving Britain Ahead June 2018

5.3. Natural England dealt with the special qualities of the Chilterns in their written representations (Deadline 2, 22nd August 2023), requiring **further information to evaluate the potential impacts on the special qualities of the AONB**. A **red flag** raised by Natural England denoted a fundamental concern. We share that concern, and we ask that consideration is given to the forthcoming boundary extension. A strong candidate is the **17 landscape character areas** to the south of the A505 and to the east of the airport. **The CCB has promoted this land as a potential candidate since 2013**. If we adopt a **Rochdale Envelope** approach (i.e., a measure of reasonable flexibility in the final design delivery), then it follows that the proposed future operation and mitigation is the subject of some detailed scrutiny at this stage. **In any event, it's difficult to envisage how overflying aircraft can be mitigated.**

5.4. The following we advance as matters that the applicant can agree with us.

5.6. **More aircraft will overfly the AONB and candidate AONB** at an altitude that impacts the tranquillity of the AONB (an acknowledged 7,000ft or lower). A key feature for landscape assessment is '*the aesthetic or perceptual characteristics of the landscape within the Chilterns AONB*'. We know that the Examining Authority has visited the National Trust's Ivinghoe Beacon, a popular recreational site, already affected.

Why 7,000 ft? We understand that landing lights are switched on at 10,000ft. Natural England has asked this question.

5.7. **The AONB boundary extension, if progressed to a conclusion, will materially raise the sensitivity** of the landscape to the south of the A505 and to the east of the airport operation. The DCO will, however, need to take account of the proposed expansion of the Chilterns AONB, currently being investigated by consultants on behalf of Natural England. Although the area of search for the potential AONB designation has not yet been published, CCB has since 2013 promoted the consideration of land to the east and south of Luton, which could bring the boundaries closer to the airport and/or affect the nature of the AONB's setting. AONB status considerably raises the **sensitivity of the landscape** it covers. The Environmental Statement is alert to this (see **Volume 5 – 5.02 Appendix 14.9**).

To what extent have the applicant's/promoters considered this?

6.0. Agenda Q 4 - Effects from lighting

5.1. **Dark Skies**. On lighting, we propose some scrutiny/discussion of the **applicant's Light Obtrusion Assessment**.

5.2. **Dark skies** are constituent components of tranquillity. At the ES scoping stage, the Planning Inspectorate noted that a lighting assessment should include the impacts upon the Chilterns AONB and its effect on the dark skies landscape.

5.3. **CCB Promotes** discussion of the submitted **Light Obstruction Assessment** and its implications for:

(a) the dark skies protection of the AONB, including potentially an extension south of the A505, and

(b) how greater volumes of descending aircraft, on their approach, will impact dark skies. Our understanding is that many operators have policies that urge their pilots to keep the landing lights on whenever the aircraft is at a threshold of 10,000 ft or lower.

5.4. A **Light Obtrusion Assessment** has been completed by the applicant. It is included in the ES appendix 5.2, noting that it does not expressly assess impacts to the Chilterns AONB but that the proposed development is within acceptable limits within the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guidance. The ES in chapter 14, page 12, states, '*It can therefore be demonstrated that the visible effects of obtrusive light within the AONB would not be noticeable*'. This is confined to the existing built envelope and discounts the lighting emitted by overflying aircraft and the potential for AONB expansion within the landscape south of the A505. **On lighting**, the AONB is a relatively dark skies landscape. The Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) attribute an AONB as an environmental zone 'EI Natural' and a 'Dark Environment'.² and the 2019-2023 AONB Management Plan acknowledges this as one of the special qualities of the AONB.

We noted that the **Planning Inspectorate at ES Scoping stage** (see ES Ch 14 and Table 14.5) responded that the lighting assessment should be clearly signposted and an assessment of the impact on the Chilterns AONB and effect on the dark skies landscape.

6.0 QUESTION 5 – Mitigation and other matters of note.

6.1. **On aircraft noise** (referred to in the GCGF) as 'the noise envelope'. Noise forecasts are proposed to be updated every 5 years. **We seek technical assurances.** The operator's section 73 variation call-in (currently before the Secretary of State), from 18 to 19 MPPA is, in part, predicated on engine technology not being delivered within their anticipated timescale. We have grave concerns about whether these technical improvements can be accurately predicted. We question the general approach here that an '**evidence-based**' decision-making forum should engage in an element of crystal ball gazing, no matter how well-informed.

Can the applicants/promotors comment on how the impact of aircraft technology can be reported to this examination when it is a wholly evolving sector?

6.2. **CCB Promotes** a discussion of aircraft noise and its impact on tranquillity. **The Green Growth explanatory note (GCGF APP 217 and APP 218)** makes the point at its 3.2.5, that '*the next generation of aircraft technology that are expected to start to become available in the mid-2030s (and the subsequent generation expected from the 2050s onwards) do not yet exist and their noise performance is unknown. It is also not possible to accurately forecast at this point in time the expected rate at which this next generation aircraft will be adopted into the fleet*'.

The CCB assumes that the **Rochdale Envelope** methodology cannot apply, where such uncertainty exists. [i.e. reserving judgment as regards future matters of design].

6.3. **On aircraft noise** (in the **GCGF APP 217 and APP 218 - Vol 7 (7.08)** 'the noise envelope'), forecasts are to be periodically updated every 5 years. The ultimate goal is open-ended, stating that '*the alternative noise forecast will be used to progressively test whether the DCO noise limits (and corresponding thresholds) could be reduced from 2039 onwards*'. (see 3.3.5

² ILP Guidance Note 1: the reduction of obtrusive light, updated May 26, 2021 | ILP Guidance Notes, Industry, Technical. GN01/21

of the GCGF). We focus on ‘could’ here, which is ambiguous if it’s part of a suite of binding commitments. This is a **mere aspiration**.

6.4. On **surface traffic and transport**, the Green Controlled Growth Framework (GCGF) contains several legally binding commitments, including aircraft noise, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and surface access volumes. We welcome a discussion of the implications of increased **surface access traffic movements and its impact on tranquillity**. **We say this because** an undertaking is made that 55% of all passengers will arrive by non-sustainable modes when Phase 2(b), is fully operational. (Table 6.1 on page 22 of the GCCF **APP 217**).

6.5. By implication, 17.6 MPPA surface movements (max) would thus be by ‘unsustainable’ modes’. The ES on air quality, notes that, ‘*ammonia emissions from road traffic can also affect the nitrogen deposition at ecological sites*’. At the present time, no government guidance exists on the assessment of ammonia. Nevertheless, increased traffic impacts health, ecology and tranquillity. The review of ecological sites in the AONB needs to be considered and included in the air quality monitoring, for example, monitoring at the Sharpenhoe and Sundon Hills SSSI (86 ha of unimproved chalk grassland). **The CCB is keen to open up a discussion as to how such surface access movements affect tranquillity**.

6.6. **Air Quality Review**. The GCGF Vol 7 (7.08) at 4.4.3 deals with a periodic air quality review, stating that, ‘*if the total forecasts are no more than 20% higher than was forecast in the Environmental Statement, no further action is required*’. We are unsure if this means that the forecast in the ES can be exceeded by a ceiling of up to 20% at the periodic review (our emphasis). **CCB welcomes clarification on this**.

6.7. **Air Quality and Ecological Networks**. The GCGF at 4.4.3 deals with a periodic air quality review. We seek assurances on this mechanism, and we seek an expansion of the baseline assessment to include ecological sensitivity, including water ecology (especially on the Rivers Lee and Mimram). The River Mimram is a chalk stream, fed from the chalk aquifer. Chalk streams are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of new development.

6.8. CCB seeks the most rigorous standards for air quality emissions. With increased overflying, air quality will impact a greater number of people (human receptors) as well as landscape ones (AONB receptors, including ecological ones). The air quality forecasts in the ES can be exceeded by a **ceiling of up to 20% at any periodic review**. If that is the case, then this ambition is greatly diminished. **Is our understanding correct? If so, how can this be controlled?**

7.0. QUESTION 5 - Suitability of mitigation measures

7.1. Mitigation Measures.

We welcome mitigation but cannot see how overflying aircraft, with landing lights on, can be mitigated. We conclude that the CROW Act, section 85 and Development Plan policy and AONB Management Plan policy cannot be satisfied.

7.2. **Natural England seeks a discussion of potential mitigation measures**. Natural England, in their 22nd August written representation, sought clarification on the basis of a flight elevation below 7,000 ft. We welcome the applicant’s clarification as to why this elevation was chosen. Natural England’s point to a lack of information has yielded further discussion on

the delivery of an assessment methodology, to be agreed upon between Natural England and Luton Rising. Is this **now in the public domain?**

7.3. To assist, tranquillity is impacted by, in this case the AONB, overflying, and the impact is both a noise and visual. Below 7,000 ft, we assume, noise is audible and below 10,000 ft visibility is evident, and at that threshold, most aircraft pilots will turn on their landing lights. Dark skies are a constituent ingredient of tranquillity.

7.4. The applicant relies on legally binding commitments enshrined in the **Green Controlled Growth Framework Vol 7 (GCGF APP 217 and APP 218)** to deliver strict controls over aircraft noise, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and surface access traffic (please see Vol 7 ‘Other Documents’ – 7.08). This process is promoted as a **dynamic process** in that the threshold targets are set and the subject of 5 yearly periodic reviews. Various standards are triggered by the MPPA threshold targets for phases 1, 2(a), and 2(b). An **independent review body** will preside over delivery and enforcement, and these commitments are linked to schedule 8 of the draft DCO.

7.5. The GCGF presents a methodology. If this DCO is to be consented to, then these thresholds or metrics need **to be far more ambitious**. 2 targets/metrics are set out, and we promote a discussion around their ambition and enforceability, during the examination. We set them out below.

7.6. **TARGET**. On **surface traffic and transport**, the GCGF contains a commitment that **55%** of all 32 MPPA will arrive by ‘non-sustainable’ modes following Phase 2(b) (2043), i.e., when fully operational. We understand at present this figure is **62%** (of 18 MPPA). **Applicant to agree.**

7.7. It is accepted in the papers that private car drivers may seek to avoid the Luton – Stevenage strategic transport corridor by following several lower-category routes in the A505 to A602 corridor (see discussion in the ES Ch 4 and Table 4.1 which shows the significant number who travel by car). This may have implications for any extended AONB boundary south of the A505 corridor.

7.8. GCGF on aircraft noise (referred to in the GCGF) as ‘the noise envelope’ noise forecasts are to be updated every 5 years. Again, the ambition is stated but, in this case is open-ended, saying that, ‘the *alternative noise forecast will be used to progressively test whether the DCO noise limits (and corresponding thresholds) could be reduced from 2039 onwards*’. (Please see 3.3.5 of the GCGF and 16.2 of the ES). We focus on ‘could’ here, which is ambiguous if it’s part of a suite of binding commitments.

TABLE TWO - CCB IN SUMMARY

CCB seeks a discussion on the impacts of increased overflying, including over land that may be included within the AONB boundary extension.

This matter is before the Examining Authority because the Planning Inspectorate sought information on the boundary extension project. The applicant has incorporated this into the ‘below 7,000 ft overflying figures’ (see in ES Ch 14, the figures 14.14 for the baseline, 14.15 for Phase 1, 14.16 for phase 2(a) and 14.17 for phase 2(b) – all dealing with the number of overflights up to 7,000 ft.

These issues impact on the special qualities of the Chilterns AONB (denoted in our 2019-2024 Management Plan and including, ‘**relative tranquillity**’). The ES denotes the AONB

landscape receptor to be potentially sensitive to change, including, at sub-section (x), ‘*the aesthetic or perceptual characteristics of the landscape within the Chilterns AONB*’ (see 14.9.4 in ES Ch 14 landscape and visual). **CCB welcomes a discussion of these issues at the Examination.** Our key point is that when considering relative tranquillity, some weight must be given to the boundary extension review.

CCB promotes a discussion dealing with the ambition to deliver a ‘jet zero’ strategy in airport operations. Phase 2(b) requires that a more aggressive strategy should ‘kick in’ between phases 1 (2027) and then 2(a) (2039) to 2(b) (2043). As it stands by 2(b) and thereafter, 55% of surface travel, by mode, would be by ‘non-sustainable’ means. This pressure will inevitably impact a **vast hinterland**, and this will include route corridors within the Chilterns. The ES Ch 18 (Traffic and Transport) cannot be expected to model how this dispersed traffic flow would manifest outside the principal strategic corridors. ES Ch 18 deals with the framework travel plan. Paragraph 18.1.12 deals with a ‘*do something*’ scenario to shift surface transport modes. The key question, considering the significant growth proposed, is ‘**is this ambitious enough?**’ We say, ‘no’. We promote more ambitious targets in the delivery of mitigation.

In adopting the ‘**Rochdale Envelope**’ methodology (*Crown v Rochdale MBC ex parte Milne 2000*), the CCB supports assessing the ‘worst case scenario’ based upon ‘likely significant effects’. Aircraft technology will, doubtless, evolve over the projected period for phases 1, 2(a) and 2(b) but we **do not know** the exact details of that evolution. Nevertheless, the ES is clear in its sensitivity analysis for landscape matters that this would result in ‘no change’ to the likely effect. Future technological improvements are confined to guesswork. Again, we welcome the applicant’s agreement that this is correct.

8.0. MATTERS OF COMMON GROUND

CCB, thus, concludes that it is accepted by all parties and this common ground that,

- More aircraft will overfly the AONB at an altitude that impacts the tranquillity of the AONB (an acknowledged 7,000ft or less).
- A key feature for landscape assessment is ‘*the aesthetic or perceptual characteristics of the landscape within the Chilterns AONB*’.
- The AONB boundary extension, if progressed to a conclusion, will materially raise the sensitivity of the landscape to the south of the A505 and to the east of the airport operation.
- The applicant’s GCGF surface access travel and transport projections at Phase 2(a) amount to 55% of 32 mppa by non-sustainable modes (worst case, assuming one flying passenger per vehicle).
- The GCGF projections on emissions appear to rely on technologies that are, as yet, undiscovered. The Green Growth explanatory note makes the point that at its 3.2.5, ‘*the next generation of aircraft technology that are expected to start to become available in the mid-2030s (and the subsequent generation expected from the 2050s onwards) do not yet exist and their noise performance is unknown. It is also not possible to accurately forecast*

at this point in time the expected rate at which this next generation aircraft will be adopted into the fleet’.

- The GCGF on noise is ambiguous on the delivery of future targets.
- The promotion of air travel cannot be deemed sustainable. The applicant needs to accept that. It may be the case that net zero is achievable in the energy used to run the airport terminals in the distant future. Transport to and from the airport, which must rise commensurate with the increased passenger numbers, is another matter fraught with speculation. The **green controlled growth mechanism** must be divided into **tangible deliverables** (biodiversity updates within the red line planning application area, for example), **policy choices** (mechanisms to protect tranquillity) and longer-term **visions and goals** (net zero, for example). **We recommend a detailed set of gateways and ambitions/targets** are set out against what can be delivered within a DCO/NSIP as compared to what forms aspirational goals. That both helps the decision-makers, the public and other stakeholders when they come to comment on the future ES/DCO. A good deal of the GCGF is speculative and should be given proportionate weight in the balancing of land use and other matters.

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3rd October 2023