



# The Planning Inspectorate

## **The Planning Act 2008**

### **Application for Development Consent for London Luton Airport Expansion project**

**Case Ref: TR020001**

### **The Examining Authority's Note of Access Required and Unaccompanied Site Inspections**

#### **Background**

The Examining Authority ('the ExA') undertook an Access Required Site Inspection (ARSI) to the Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden of St. Paul's Walden Bury followed by Unaccompanied Site Inspections (USIs) to the Sue Ryder Neurological Care Centre and All Saints Church to support the examination of an application for development consent for the proposed London Luton Airport Expansion project ('the application') on Monday 27 November 2023.

Advance permission to enter the grounds of St Paul's Walden Bury, which was not formally open to the public at the time of the inspection, was obtained so the inspections could be undertaken. The ExA undertook the inspection of the gardens on an unaccompanied basis.

The site inspection was undertaken in order to observe the character, appearance and setting of designated heritage assets, the surrounding rural locality and noise from overflying aircraft.

#### **Particulars of the Site Inspection**

The visit was undertaken by: Jo Dowling, Richard Hunt and Andrew Robinson.

The visit was undertaken by car and on foot. Weather conditions were light to heavy rain showers with a temperature circa 6 degrees centigrade. Weather conditions were not suitable to appreciate long range views or to see aircraft departing from the airport.

The airport was operating in easterly mode. During the inspections, the ExA used Flightradar24 to identify which planes were passing overhead at the various locations that they visited, when internet connectivity allowed.

The inspections commenced at approximately 12:00 and finished at approximately 13:20. A list of the locations visited as part of the ARSI is attached at Annex A and locations as part of the USI at Annex B.



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### **Annex A: List of locations visited on the Access Required Site Inspection on Monday 27 November 2023**

The ExA arrived at St. Paul's Walden Bury and made their presence known to Mr Bowes-Lyon (site owner). The inspection started in the car park located to the front of the house and the ExA walked in a northerly direction through the central grassed avenue observing the character, appearance, setting and general ambience of the gardens as well as the listed statues and other features such as trees and hedgerows located within the garden grounds. The ExA walked towards the Grade II listed Hercules statue located towards the northern end of the park and observed the sounds of aircraft that had departed from the airport.

The ExA then walked towards the Organ House, heading back towards the main house via the grassed terraced open-air theatre (which also includes the 'Rotunda', 'The Sphinxes' statues and the 'Running Footman'), 'Venus and Adonis' statue and the lake in the south-eastern part of the gardens. The ExA observed the character, appearance and setting of the park, including the effect from the sound from overhead flights which, due to the inclement weather conditions, were not visible. Aircraft noise was noticeable and disrupted conversation. The ExA returned to the car park at 12:45 and completed the ARSI.



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## **Annex B: List of locations visited on the Unaccompanied Site Inspection on Monday 27 November 2023**

The ExA departed St. Paul's Walden Bury and drove to the Sue Ryder Neurological Care Centre. The ExA drove around the perimeter of the site and stopped at the entrance to observe sound from overflying aircraft. Due to the inclement weather conditions, aircraft (which were at an altitude of approximately 3,000 ft.) were not visible. Aircraft noise was noticeable but did not interrupt conversation.

The ExA then drove to the Grade I listed Church of All Saints and entered the church yard to observe the character, appearance and setting of the church and grounds as well as the sound from overflying aircraft. The ExA noted audible, distant traffic noise from the A1. The ExA left the church at 13:20 and completed the USI.