

Friends of Wigmore Park wish to reply to **REP 7-064** Volume 8 Additional Submissions (Examination) 8.163 Applicant's Response to Deadline 6 Submissions Appendix A - Friends of Wigmore Park.

Table 1.2

I.D 1

FoWP Original Submission

The main through road for the airport is Percival Way, to the north side of this road from Provost Way to Prospect Way; the land usage consists of a few industrial units, the vast majority unused, various small non passenger use car parks, and unused derelict space. This land is ideal for development of a multi-storey car park complex. It is already within the airport footprint, so requires no purchase requirements.

It can be developed with no intrusion into current airport operations, and more crucially, no intrusion into the local roads and communities along Eaton Green Road/Wigmore Lane.

Luton Rising response

The Applicant rejects the suggestion that the area mentioned could be developed with no intrusion into current operations, as many of the plots in this area are currently occupied by third parties or by activities associated with airport operations. The construction of a multi storey car park in this area would also potentially result in visual intrusion and would not be operationally efficient from either a staff or passenger perspective due to its location relative to either the existing or proposed terminal.

FoWP reply

The applicant raises concerns about existing currently occupied premises by third parties, yet wishes to compulsory purchase more buildings than is required for a multi-story car park. Since plans for New Century Park Access Road were first announced the applicant/Luton Borough Council has refused to extend leases on the few properties that were occupied forcing many companies to reluctantly relocate while other companies have still to relocate.

The applicant also comments about the adverse effects on airport operations, yet plans to clear the majority of the site.

I.D2

FoWP Original Submission

Passenger routes would be via the same access points as now, as the current route to the Long-Term Car Park runs along Percival Way We believe this shows that WVP does not need to be removed from public use until Phase 2 of the application is actually required, and adequately funded

Luton Rising response

The phasing of the Proposed Development means that new areas of parking are required to be constructed at Assessment Phase 1, to accommodate relocated spaces from the existing Long

Stay car park associated with amendments to the airside apron, and to provide additional parking spaces in line with airport growth. This is set out within Chapter 8 of the Transport Statement [AS-123]

FoWP reply

The rear of Percival Way is a vast area that extends from Proctor Way via Prospect Way to Provost Way and beyond, with some of it being used for non-airport related third party parking.

The applicant has not provided a genuine reason why land off Percival Way cannot be used and has a mind-set of building on an award winning public park with its Country Wildlife Site rather than a large brown field site that has been semi derelict for 20 years.

Table 1.3

I.D1

FoWP Submission

“The airport’s head of corporate affairs, Joe Chapman, updated members of Stansted Parish Council at their meeting last Wednesday (Nov 15) – and urged them and other councils to apply for money to help tackle the problem. He revealed the airport had ring-fenced £200,000 to alleviate the nuisance of air passengers parking in streets in towns and villages around the airport to avoid paying parking fees when they fly abroad. Mr Chapman said: “We have transport forums and a sub-group which specifically deal with issues of fly- parking and have made progress with how we tackle this issue, with a significant pot of money ring-fenced to deal with local traffic, but it is the prerogative of local communities and councils to act. We have the money to invest.”

He assured councillors that it was working closely with other organisations, including Essex Trading Standards and Uttlesford District Council, to stop “meet and greets” and discourage taxis from picking up passengers from the streets and taking them to the airport”

We feel the contrast with Luton could not be greater with the principal difference being that the Council in Luton owns the airport and has made a political decision rather than representing residents’ interests, while the airport operator, unlike Stansted, has no interest in the plight of local communities regarding fly parking

Luton Rising response

The Applicant will be providing a Residual Impact Fund (RIF) that will be managed by a Steering Group of the Airport Transport Forum. One of the uses of the RIF will be to fund measures to mitigate the impacts of fly-parking. Relevant local highway authorities will be able to propose measures to mitigate fly-parking. These measures will be delivered via the processes outlined in the OTRIMMA (REP5-041).

FoWP Reply.

The membership of the TRIMMA Steering Group will comprise relevant highway authorities (Luton Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire Council, Buckinghamshire Council, National Highways), the Applicant and the airport operator.

We cannot see how the TRIMMA could allocate funds if member Luton Borough Council follows Council policy by refusing to apply or accept any funding. The view of the Council is that local residents living close to the Luton Airport should not be given special treatment when residents living near the town's railway stations and hospital are given none. The fact that the Council owns the airport is not a consideration but FoWP see it as being the reason.

Councillors at Luton Borough Council have consistently voted down all proposals that the airport should fund fly parking issues in residential areas close to the airport for political reasons including the fact that the ruling party has no serving councillors in the worst affected areas. They have made it clear in three votes that residents should pay for parking permits to combat airport parkers. The Directors of Luton Rising also took part in the first vote and voted against the airport funding any residential parking scheme before the Local Government Ombudsman intervened so preventing them in voting in other later votes.

To follow council policy we suspect that Luton Borough Council will not even raise fly parking with this subcommittee, as being an issue, leaving local residents to pick up the bill for new parking controls while the Council spends their share of the pot of money on other projects.

Due to the unlikely funding of residential parking schemes close to Luton Airport by TRIMMA, we would seek another method written into a Section 106 that guarantees funding if local residents wish for new parking schemes to combat an expanded airport.

Table 1.4

I.D1

FoWP Original Submission

Friends of Wigmore Park, at the Open Hearing Event dated 27th November, were asked to provide a summary of vacancies quoted at the hearing with examples of vacancies at Luton Airport that we believe would not alleviate poverty particularly due to single parent families and communities that traditionally have large families.

This was in response to comments made by Robin Porter, the CEO of Luton Borough Council and the ultimate owner of Luton Airport that having additional employment at the airport would help end poverty by 2040. Mr Porter ignored the fact that many people working at the airport are subject to in-work poverty and that the airport, and its partners need a large pool of poor people willing to work for low pay for the airport to remain competitive.

Luton Rising response

Jobs at the airport cover a variety of functions across a range of employers. As shown in Figure 10 of ES Appendix 11.1 Oxford Economics The Economic Impact of London Luton Airport [APP-079], the average wage of those employed at the airport is above the average wage of all Bedfordshire employees. This pattern of employment shows the airport generating new jobs at a variety of skill and wage levels as the airport grows.

The airport operator has been an accredited Real Living Wage employer since 2022 and as such all employment provided through London Luton Airport Operations Ltd is paid at or in excess of the Real Living Wage and employees have access to employee benefit schemes including automatic health benefits.

FoWP reply

The applicant in its reply has not stated that an expanded airport will alleviate poverty.

The applicant has ignored the fact that airport expansion basically involves a new terminal, aprons and car parks as the main sources of employment. Companies like Easyjet that have a HQ at Luton operate to 155 airports in 36 countries flying 1,024 routes using many UK and foreign bases. They are unlikely to employ more staff at its HQ due to Luton expansion. Easyjet's terminal and apron operation is operated by a third party handling agent to reduce costs to a minimum.

<https://corporate.easyjet.com/about/what-we-do/>

(URL checked 19th January 2024)

The applicant also focuses on the airport operator, who makes up a small proportion of the terminal workforce while ignoring all the other companies that operate out of the existing terminal or provide services on the apron or car parks. It is also to be noted that the airport operator also outsources work out to third parties to avoid paying the living wage.

FoWP Original Submission

The planning application for airport expansion in Phase 1, Phase 2a and 2b is focused primarily on terminal, apron and car park provision and the jobs they will provide. These are traditionally seen as poorly paid work provided in retail, food outlets, check-in, baggage handling, cleaning and security. We believe, using the examples above, that this will not alleviate poverty particularly as many vacancies are seasonal, part time or zero hour contracts to match the different waves of flight times. The airport has suffered many strikes due to low wages that employers are reluctant to raise due to winning contracts from the airport operator or the airlines that are won by submitting the lowest tender.

Luton Rising response includes

The Applicant can confirm that the airport operator has never to date had a strike amongst its Employees.

FoWP reply

The applicant has a short memory, as the last security staff strike was over staff members being forced to work an extra 15 days a year with anti-social shift patterns.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-48107431>

(URL checked 15th January 2024)

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/luton-airport-security-staff-launch-strike-in-dispute-over-shift-patterns-a4160091.html>

(URL checked 15th Jan 2024)

Security guards [Luton Airport](#) have walked out in a lengthy strike over shift patterns.

Members of Unite walked out on Wednesday and will remain on strike until July 23 unless talks next week lead to a breakthrough.

The union said the airport was imposing a new shift pattern affecting around 120 security guards which means they will have to work an extra 15 days a year.

In a statement the union said security guards are determined to “fight back”.

Unite regional officer Jeff Hodge said: "Security guards are determined to fight back against Luton Airport's heavy-handed and anti-social shift changes.

"Management are trying to force staff to work for longer, with shorter breaks, while piling extra costs on the workforce. The airport management have even callously cut the amount of free weekends workers get to spend with their friends and family.

“Workers would not be taking this action unless they had genuine and serious grievances. We hope the airport listens and works with Unite to resolve this dispute.”

Luton Airport reassured passengers that they would not be affected in a statement on its website, stressing “airport security will not be compromised”.

A spokesperson for the Bedfordshire-based airport told the Standard: “Previous walkouts by the same small number of Unite members have not caused any disruption and we would like to reassure passengers that it will be no different this time.

“Whilst we are disappointed Unite are continuing with their strike, we are pleased that Unite has finally agreed to meet with us and we remain committed to finding a resolution.”

Representatives of the airport, Unite and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service ([ACAS](#)) are due to meet for talks on June 12 to try to resolve the dispute. The security workers previously walked out between May 1 and 5, and then again from May 7 to 13.

End

While security staff are directly employed by LLAOL, the airport operator has also been plagued by staff strikes who fulfil LLAOL roles but working for third parties on outsourced contracts. Below is one example:

<https://www.unitetheunion.org/news-events/news/2023/august/luton-airport-passengers-facing-toilet-hell-as-cleaners-strike-over-pay>

(URL checked 22nd January 2024)

Thursday 3rd August 2023

Cleaners working at Luton Airport will take strike action this month over low pay.

The 30 plus workers who are members of Unite, the UK’s leading union, are employed by Sasse Ltd on an outsourced contract.

Low paid

The workers, who are currently paid just £10.90 an hour, have rejected a pay increase of five per cent for day workers and seven per cent for night workers. With the real inflation rate (RPI) currently standing at 10.7 per cent this amounts to a substantial real terms pay cut.

The workers have announced two initial 24-hour strikes beginning at **06:30 on Friday 11 August**, with the second strike taking place from the same time on **Wednesday 30 August**.

Huge amounts

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham said: *“Sasse has been caught red handed. It is prepared to pay out huge amounts in dividends, yet it doesn’t believe it is necessary to give its very low paid cleaners a fair pay increase.*

“Our members at Sasse will be receiving the union’s complete support.”

Dirty toilets

The strike action will result in toilets not being cleaned, toilet rolls not being replaced, bins being not emptied, communal areas across the airport not being cleaned and general uncleanliness throughout the airport.

Sasse is a successful company that made a gross profit of over £4 million in 2022 and paid out a dividend of £500,000.

Dirty airport

Unite regional officer Jeff Hodge said: *“Passengers using Luton Airport this month should be braced for toilet hell. Toilets will not be cleaned, toilet paper will not be replaced, bins will be overflowing and the airport will be dirty.*

“While passengers may be alarmed and angry, this dispute is entirely due to the refusal of Sasse to make our members a fair pay offer.”

End

I.D7

FoWP Original Submission

Other jobs on the decline are highly skilled aircraft maintenance staff; employment has been on a decline at Luton for many years with most hangars now being used purely for aircraft storage or have been demolished to create aircraft stands and an executive terminal. Demolished hangars: Hangar 62, Hangar 63, Hangar 102. Hangars used for aircraft storage: Hangar 7 Hangar, 8 Hangar, 125 (does offer limited man in a van maintenance by third party provider) Hangar 129. Hangars out of Use: Hangar 9 Hangar 60 Hangar 127 Hangars still being used by airlines for maintenance: Hangar 61 (TUI) Hangar 89 (easyJet) Hangars used principally for storage but with

limited line and base maintenance. Hangar 201(Harrods) Hangar 202(Harrods). Self-driving vehicles are not far away so we would also challenge the predicted jobs airport expansion will actually provide.

Luton Rising response

The Proposed Development does not involve any further demolition of maintenance hangars and includes construction of two additional hangars to ensure sufficient space to maintain the growing fleet of aircraft that would be based at the Airport.

Although some hangarage is currently not being fully used in part due to the collapse of Monarch Aircraft Engineering in 2019, hangar space is being productively used. Hangars will be refurbished and brought back into full use again as the airport grows past 2019 traffic levels and in line with demand from airline customers.

FoWP reply

The last two hangars to be built are hangars 125 and hangar 219 (called hangar 129 in previous submission error). These modern hangars are used for aircraft storage. The plans submitted that show two possible new hangars do not necessarily mean the creation of a single job, as there is a demand from business jet owners to park their aircraft inside hangars and not for aircraft heavy maintenance at Luton.



The photograph above shows business jet storage at Luton. This hangar has since been demolished and replaced by new storage hangars in different locations around the airport.