

APPENDIX 1 – FARNBOROUGH 2040 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Dear _____

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals to change the operation of Farnborough Airport to 2040. This response is submitted by East Hampshire District Council.

The Council strongly objects to the proposed changes to the airport's operation because of the serious adverse impact on residents, businesses and the environment. The Council is also disappointed by the lack of direct engagement on the proposals given the district's close proximity to Farnborough airport. Given the implications for the East Hampshire District, the Council would therefore request to be directly involved in the future engagement and consultation process.

This consultation gives rise to the following issues for East Hampshire;

Climate and environment - The proposals conflict with the Council's Climate and Environment Strategy 2020 – 2025 and Net Zero ambitions. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and agreed its Climate and Environment Strategy 2020 -2025. Both stating a commitment to reducing the Council's own carbon footprint and also to work with others to reduce the carbon footprint of the district. The impacts of aviation are well documented and the Council would want to understand how the airport's operation could be extended without increasing the carbon footprint of Hampshire to meet Net Zero targets. The Council would also specifically like to understand how East Hampshire's natural environment would be impacted in perpetuity by this proposed expansion.

Noise and pollution impact - The current proposals pose a massive increase in impact on East Hampshire settlements from increased overflying. This especially affects Whitehill & Bordon, Alton, Liphook, Petersfield and surrounding areas. It is predicted that the greatest change in noise impact will be experienced at weekends and public holidays, with proposals to more than double the number of flights at these times. The number of flights using bigger, heavier aircraft are planned to more than double at the weekend, and these heavier aircraft are likely to be noisier than smaller equivalent aircraft, increasing the impact further. This does not include all of the other flights, excluded from the quota count, that also impact our residents, visitors and wildlife. In particular, the Council would like to understand how more than doubling the number of non-weekday flights maintains the same percentage of non-weekday flights as exists today.

The lack of specific detail available at this stage makes it impossible to compare current conditions with those likely to arise as a result of the proposed increase in flights, however based on the extent of the proposed increases, noise and pollution levels for settlements in East Hampshire will be severely compromised, directly resulting in a proportional increase in harm to quality of life.

As a case study, Whitehill & Bordon is one of the settlements that will see a 20% increase of overflying, with flights that start earlier and finish later every day. Residents here are likely to only see limited benefit from the proposed sustainability fund, and no eligibility to any benefits through the sound insulation grant scheme.

In addition, low and increased quantity of flying over environmentally protected areas (e.g. Woolmer Forest, Butser and Hangers Special Areas of Conservation) will impact on the incredible diversity of wildlife and the “tranquillity” of these areas. We would urge that a proper assessment of the impacts of lower and increased flying from Farnborough Airport, be undertaken to assess the harm to local wildlife and protected species before a final decision is taken.

Economic impact - East Hampshire’s tourist economy is largely based on its astounding natural beauty. With so much of the district within a National Park, the area’s tranquillity is a highly attractive attribute for visitors. A network of hospitality businesses support this, including hotels, bed-and-breakfasts and rural pubs which account for around 3000 local jobs. Many of these are small businesses, highly vulnerable to changes in visitor patterns and still in the process of recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More flights with greater noise pollution will harm the visitor experience and the viability of local tourism and hospitality businesses that rely on visitors.

East Hampshire has a relatively low number of businesses that directly operate within the aviation and aerospace sector – around 31 businesses from a business base of over 6,000. We anticipate the positive impact of the proposals on the district will therefore be relatively modest. However, we also note that existing economic impact assessments (e.g. NLP, 2020) have focused on the benefit to Rushmoor, Hart and Surrey Heath with little quantifiable evidence provided about the impact on districts including East Hampshire that will be affected by the increase in air traffic. This is also reflected in the economic impact data presented on the Farnborough 2040 website which defines the local area as Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath. We would therefore request that an assessment of the economic impact on East Hampshire is incorporated as part of the planning application.

Impact on the Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2024 - The proposals to increase air traffic has a detrimental impact on the following corporate objectives;

- A safer, healthier and more active East Hampshire
- A thriving local economy with infrastructure to support our ambitions
- An environmentally aware and cleaner East Hampshire

In summary, East Hampshire District Council strongly objects to the proposed operational changes to Farnborough Airport due to the direct impact on quality of life, local economy and the environment. The Council would urge that a full assessment of these impacts is carried out and fully considered before a decision is taken.

Yours faithfully