

Ref: BS/NPL/Local Plan Feb 2025

6th February 2025

Planning Policy Team
Luton Borough Council
Town Hall
George Street
Luton
LU1 2BQ

Dear Planning Policy Team

Luton Rising response to the Luton Local Plan Community Involvement Paper - Issues and Options

As a significant landowner and business in Luton, (wholly owned by Luton Borough Council, but operating with an independently chaired Board), I am writing to express Luton Rising's support for the general themes and direction outlined in the Luton Local Plan Community Involvement Paper - Issues and Options.

At Luton Rising, we see the development of a new Local Plan as representing a pivotal moment for Luton, presenting a real opportunity to consolidate the strong progress that has been made in recent years across the town, with a clear focus on how we can take further collective steps to achieve the Luton 2040 vision.

London Luton Airport is a very significant business and employer in the local area and as its owner we are progressing growth and expansion plans encapsulated in the DCO application currently being considered by government. We also have significant non-airport landholdings in the broader vicinity of the airport that we are committed to seeking to bring forward as development opportunities, that can both complement the airport focus and help to improve the alignment of the wider airport district with the plans to regenerate the town centre.

We believe these land holdings offer significant opportunity for both businesses and residents of Luton and our focus is on developing proposals to secure the long-term, large-scale public and private investment support that will be necessary to realise this ambition.

Support for Key Themes

We fully support the focus on providing good quality, affordable homes. Given the land constraints, identifying specific areas where new housing developments could be beneficial is crucial, and we are willing to discuss the potential of some of our landholdings for such projects.

Promoting employment, learning, skills, and innovation, as well as supporting the vitality and viability of town centre uses, are critical components of the proposed plan. Collaboration on projects that could create job opportunities and stimulate economic growth in Luton is something we are keen to explore further.

We are also committed to ensuring that our activities, although commercially based, also focus on reducing poverty and inequality, promoting social inclusion, improving public health, and encouraging healthier lifestyles in line with the aspirations in the plan for this.

Proposing specific actions or projects that could contribute to environmental sustainability, such as green infrastructure or renewable energy initiatives, is a priority for us, taking demonstrable measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate change resilience. Through the innovative Green Controlled Growth framework in our DCO, we are pioneering a new approach for how these impacts can be measured and used to help inform more sustainable development. This framework sets binding and independently governed environmental limits for carbon emissions, air quality, noise, and surface access. We would be happy to engage in the next stage of the plan to contribute our learnings from developing this framework and collaborate as to how this issue can be addressed more broadly.

Protecting biodiversity, air quality, water resources, and green infrastructure, as well as conserving heritage assets, are important and integrating environmental protection and embracing biodiversity net gain in future developments on our land is something we fully support. We believe this will help us not only protect nature but also enhance place quality and that this will support residents, businesses and investors alike.

Specific Response to Question 17

“What do you think the future role of the airport should be in terms of contributing to economic growth?” Options 1. “How can the Local Plan help ensure that the airport continues to provide employment and contributes towards growth, and should there be more flexibility on how land associated with the airport can be used?”

We believe the airport has a huge opportunity to continue to drive Luton’s economy and to contribute to future growth. Much of this is encapsulated in the DCO application and so we have not repeated here, though we would like to ensure consistency with the DCO in the future Local Plan.

More specifically in relation to the options raised here, our belief is that allowing greater flexibility in the use of land associated with the airport can significantly contribute to economic growth and diversity of place. By enabling further commercial developments and potentially residential areas, we can attract new businesses and services that are attracted by an airport location. This approach not only maximises the potential of the land but also creates a greater range of job opportunities and stimulates local economic activity. Flexibility in land use can further ensure that the airport remains a dynamic and integral part of our town's and the broader region's growth and development.

Ensuring Viability and Deliverability

Ensuring that our projects are financially viable and deliverable within the proposed timelines is crucial and so we are keen to engage with the development of the plan to ensure that the framework in which future projects may be brought forward also supports viable project delivery. This includes having a collective understanding of the need for adequate infrastructure to support new developments, including transport, utilities, and community facilities and how this can be best provided and funded.

Future Engagement

We would welcome engagement in the further stages of the Luton Local Plan and particularly a more detailed discussion over our non-airport sites which are material. We believe our involvement can contribute positively to the development of a robust and forward-thinking plan that benefits all stakeholders and supports our future investment ambitions.

Yours faithfully


/Nick Platts
Managing Director
Luton Rising

