

James Jamieson
Leader
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands
Shefford
SG17 5TQ

7 August 2018

SENT BY EMAIL

Dear Mr Jamieson

Re: Central Bedfordshire Council Planning Application: CB/17/05862/OUT Land North of Cranfield Airport College Road. Application approved. Decision Notice Date: 19 June 2018

Lack of consultation with neighbouring Town & Parish Councils in Bedford Borough
Increased flight movements at Cranfield Airport - noise, road traffic, air pollution and other environmental implications.

We are writing to you on behalf of our Town & Parish Council members in Bedford Borough because we and they, are very concerned indeed at the way in which Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has considered and decided the above Planning Application without consulting Town & Parish Councils in Bedford Borough or even, it would appear, Bedford Borough Council, all of which will be affected by the Application.

In case you're unaware of the Planning Application, your Council has called it a "Hybrid" Application - this means, according to your Planning Department that the Application is for a 2 Phase development of Cranfield Airport and that Phase 1 is a Full Planning Application and Phase 2 is Outline - both were considered together.

The Application will see Cranfield Airport develop an Airpark (called London Cranfield) specifically for private jets some of which are quite large. The development will include a range of operational facilities, hangars, terminal buildings etc. and a 300 bed hotel.

The outcome is that the number of flight movements will double from the current 22,000 per year to 45,000 per year after Phase 2 is completed.

The number of visitors/passengers to the airport is also expected to increase substantially to 51,000 per year at the end of Phase 1 and 70,000 per year at the end of Phase 2.

The Applicant states that between 80% and 90% of visitors will use the car as their means of transport to and from the airport.

The principal issues which are of concern to CPRE Bedfordshire and our Town & Parish Council members in Bedford Borough are these:

- **Environmental Impact on Bedford Borough - Air Pollution**
- **Aircraft Noise - Impact on Bedford Borough**
- **Impact of Additional Vehicle Movements (Car and HGV) on the rural and primary road network in Bedford Borough due to the expansion of the airport**

You may be aware, that the flightpath to and from Cranfield Airport takes aircraft directly over the villages of North Bedfordshire so any increase in flight movements will directly impact them.

Some villages are already reporting an increase in flights, aircraft stacking (“holding areas”) and associated noise levels.

These communities will also be subject to increasing levels of air pollution which currently is not effectively monitored in these areas. Air pollution is already a very serious issue in Bedford Borough and Bedfordshire as a whole.

All communities in Bedford Borough will be impacted by the increased road traffic (car and HGV) generated by the airport expansion. The village of Wootton for example, will be particularly vulnerable as would many villages to the north and west of Bedford town.

We are therefore shocked and very surprised indeed that CBC has made the decision not to consult more widely on this very important strategic Planning Application.

According to CBC’s planning website, with the exception of near neighbours, just 27 consultees were consulted on the Application despite its strategic importance regionally.

Only a small number of the Central Bedfordshire villages immediately surrounding the airports were included on the consultation list. All of them objected to the Application!

To CPRE Bedfordshire, this implies that CBC did not wish to engage with the wider community in Bedford Borough that might be impacted by this controversial expansion for fear of the negative reaction to it that they might have received.

Our questions to you as Leader of CBC are as follows:

1. Are you happy with the way in which CBC has conducted this Planning Application process and in particular the fact that Town & Parish Councils in Bedford Borough that will be impacted by the expansion of Cranfield Airport were excluded from the consultation process?
2. Was Bedford Borough Council (BBC) advised in any way by CBC that the above Planning Application was being considered? Was BBC consulted with regard to the Application either formally or informally?

4. Had you or any member of your Council, discussed the issue of the expansion of Cranfield Airport at meetings of England's Economic Heartland or at meetings of SEMLEP or at meetings of the Oxford/Cambridge Corridor "Central Growth Board (SEMLEP & Bucks)", or at meetings with the DfT?
Was the issue of the Planning Application mentioned at these meetings?

5. CBC has a legal "Duty to Cooperate" with neighbouring LA's on planning matters, particularly those of strategic importance to the area that could impact on the neighbouring LA's and their communities.

Did you or any member of your Council have "Duty to Cooperate" discussions with BBC or any other neighbouring Local Authority which related to or included the expansion of Cranfield Airport or the above Planning Application?
If so please provide details?

6. Do you think that the way in which CBC has handled this Planning Application has been in the best interest of the residents you represent and of ensuring that effective local democracy operates in Bedfordshire as a whole?

We look forward to hearing from you and in particular what action you will take in order that effective local democracy is ensured as far as this Planning Application is concerned.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Chief Executive of CBC.

Yours sincerely

Gerry Sansom
CPRE Bedfordshire