

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Robert Sinclair**

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Dear Robert,

I am writing in response to the consultation by London City Airport regarding its plans to grow air traffic and associated works. Though you are taking this forward as a 'minor material amendment' (Section 73) planning application, it would mark, perhaps, the most significant change in the Airport's operations since it first opened in 1987. The proposal needs detailed consideration given its scale and potential impact on London, requiring a robust and comprehensive environmental assessment to be undertaken and shared.

I recognise the contribution that London City Airport makes – as part of the London airports system – to the city's economic growth and prosperity, as well as jobs. I am particularly conscious of the challenges the Airport faced during the pandemic – and to some extent this year. As such, I support the Airport in securing a green recovery and think it would be well advised to prioritise this over any growth plans, in line with carbon targets.

Notwithstanding that detailed environmental assessment remains ongoing, I have significant concerns regarding the impacts of the scheme, particularly on carbon, air quality and noise. These need to be fully addressed by the Airport, as well as the associated implications for surface access.

We are facing a climate emergency and the shocking temperatures recorded this summer are just the latest example of how this is already creating direct impacts for Londoners. It is vital that all sectors play their part in contributing to a rapid reduction in carbon emissions, and aviation has a greater role than most. London City Airport's commitment to a net zero carbon target from its airport operations by 2030 is welcome. However, the forecast 79 per cent increase in aircraft carbon emissions compared to 2019 levels associated with the proposals is more than double 2022 carbon emissions and appears to be wholly at odds with the urgent need to decarbonise and your own stated net zero carbon ambitions.

The environmental assessment appears to treat technological improvements associated with the introduction of new aircraft as an outcome of the scheme. But it is unjustified to assume that the proposals are required to deliver the associated environmental benefits and risks painting a highly misleading picture of the impacts of the scheme.


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The proposals to increase the operating hours, on Saturday afternoon/evening as well as weekday early morning/late evening are a subject of significant concern for local communities. Critically, the environmental assessment fails to provide an understanding of the impact of flights in periods when none currently operate – and as such fails in its key purpose.

The Airport must, likewise, demonstrate clear steps to secure sufficient shift of passengers and staff to sustainable modes, reducing carbon emissions as well as supporting my ambition for London to have the best air quality of any major world city. This should be underpinned by a more ambitious surface access target and committed steps to secure this. The Airport also needs to reverse its plans to increase car parking by almost 30 per cent, which is inconsistent with its stated objectives. In the absence of these steps it is difficult not to see the proposals as deeply retrograde and at odds with the policies set out in my Transport Strategy and the London Plan.

The environmental assessment is, as it stands, completely inadequate to be able to fully understand the impact of the proposals on Londoners. A detailed response to the issues raised by the consultation accompanies this letter. London City Airport is proposing major changes to its operations, and it is yet to demonstrate that these can be implemented without significant environmental impacts. As such I urge you to urgently reconsider your approach.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small number '2' written below the name.

**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London