

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Position Statement on Behalf of East
Midlands Airport – Topic 6 (Employment),
Item G

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Introduction

This Position Statement is submitted on behalf of East Midlands Airport to assist the Examination into the North West Leicestershire Local Plan. It should be read alongside the Airport's representation at the Local Plan's Publication Stage and also the Local Planning Authority's proposed modifications (September 2016). This Statement relates to the Local Plan's commentary and policies for East Midlands Airport – Policy Ec4 and the supporting Policy Ec5 and Ec6 and paragraphs 8.39 – 8.48.

Position Statement

Policy Ec4 includes the approach and the policy in relation to the development of East Midlands Airport. The Airport is recognised as a 'nationally important asset' and the Plan is broadly supportive of the growth of the Airport. The Publication Draft refers to the Airport's Sustainable Development Plan¹ that was published in 2015 following public consultation in 2014. The Sustainable Development Plan sets out the strategic context for the Airport's development and it also includes detailed plans that cover Community; Economy & Surface Access; Environment; and Land Use.

The principal statement of national airport policy is set out in the Aviation Policy Framework that was published in March 2013. This replaced the 2003 The Future of Air Transport White Paper. The Aviation Policy Framework (2013)² recognises the benefits of aviation and sets a primary objective to achieve long-term economic growth and as aviation is a major contributor to the economy, its growth is supported in a framework that maintains a balance between aviation benefits and costs; particularly the contribution towards climate change and noise.

The Aviation Policy Framework also includes guidance on airport master-plans. Whilst they do not have a statutory basis, they have an objective to provide a clear statement of intent on the part of an airport operator to enable the future development of the airport to be given due consideration in local planning processes. The Government recommends that airport operators continue to produce master-plans and that they are updated at least once every

¹ East Midlands Airport Sustainable Development Plan – May 2015

² Aviation Policy Framework. DfT. Cm 8584. March 2013

five years. The East Midlands Airport Sustainable Development Plan has been prepared in line with this guidance.

The proposed modification (M17) amending paragraph 8.39 to include national aviation policy is welcomed and supported.

The proposed modifications that provide a factual update of activity at East Midlands Airport – M18, M19, M20 are supported.

As a 'major airport' defined by the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006, East Midlands Airport is required to prepare 'noise maps' and publish a Noise Action Plan every five years. Noise Action Plans are intended to where necessary, prevent and reduce environmental noise. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have issued advice on the preparation of Noise Action Plans and Defra also approve the final documents that are prepared by airport operators following extensive local consultation. East Midlands Airport has a Noise Action Plan³ in place that covers the period 2013 – 2018. It assesses and provides information on the Airport's noise control programme and reports on progress. The Airport's noise controls are also detailed in the Environment Plan that is part of the Sustainable Development Plan.

As part of the planning approval to extend the Airport's runway in 2011 the Airport entered into a unilateral undertaking (Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act) that details the provision of the Airport's Sound Insulation Grant Scheme. The Sound Insulation Grant Scheme has been in place since 2002 and it provides financial support for the sound insulation of local properties that are most affected by aircraft noise.

The planning consent for the extension of the runway includes conditions relating to the control and the reporting of environmental and noise impacts. The formal commencement of the runway works established a night noise envelope and sets a limit on the area of the Airport's night noise contour. The noise controls that are in place at East Midlands Airport are consistent with the government's aim in the Aviation Policy Framework to limit and where possible reduce the number of people that are significantly affected by aircraft noise.

³ Noise Action Plan. East Midlands Airport 2014

A proposed amendment to paragraph 8.45 of the Publication version of the Local Plan was included in the schedule of proposed modifications (M21). The amendment of this paragraph is welcomed however the following minor amendment to the text is suggested.

‘Aircraft and airport operations at East Midlands Airport can result in high levels of noise disturbance, particularly at night when background noise is generally lower. As a result of the implementation of a planning permission to extend the runway, there are now locally agreed restrictions in respect of night-time noise associated with aircraft using the Airport. Notwithstanding these restrictions there remain some concerns about night-time noise on local communities and so we will continue to work with the Airport to reduce where possible the number of people affected by noise as a result of the Airport’s development.’

The amendment to Policy Ec4(1) in the schedule of modifications (M22) is welcomed.