# LADACAN prepares legal challenge against London Luton Airport expansion over environmental concerns



The Luton and District Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise (LADACAN) is poised to initiate a legal challenge against the proposed expansion of London Luton Airport, claiming that the development was granted consent unlawfully. In a formal letter directed to Heidi Alexander, the Secretary of State for Transport, LADACAN contends that Alexander disregarded the recommendations of national planning inspectors who advised against granting development permission.

The examination of the expansion proposals began in August 2023. During this period, inspectors concluded that while the new terminal, which aims to double the airport's annual passenger capacity, would provide certain economic advantages, these benefits do not sufficiently outweigh the potential environmental detriments. Despite these findings, consent for the expansion was issued in April 2025, leading LADACAN to argue that this decision contravenes proper legal and environmental protocols.

The association's concerns are centred around what it describes as inadequate assessments of both direct and indirect impacts related to climate change, alongside a lack of definitive mitigation strategies within the expansion plan. LADACAN criticises what it perceives as an over-reliance on aspirational technologies referenced in the government's Jet Zero Strategy, a position that has drawn skepticism from the Climate Change Committee regarding its practicality. Their letter outlines several grounds for legal action, highlighting misassessments of environmental impacts and questioning the reliance on an ongoing challenge to the ‘High Ambition’ scenario proposed in the Jet Zero Strategy. Furthermore, they allege a misunderstanding of the government's commitments under the Climate Change Act 2008, pointing out inconsistencies in how this expansion is being treated in comparison to other similar developments, such as the stalled expansion at Gatwick Airport.

Andrew Lambourne, chair of LADACAN, voiced his apprehension about the broader implications of climate change, stating, “Everyone can see the worsening effects of climate change, and it’s obvious that the damage it causes comes with huge costs.” He stressed the necessity for the government to emphasise sustainability and community welfare when evaluating development projects. Alongside this, Ricardo Gama, a partner at Leigh Day representing LADACAN, underscored the criticality of adhering to the recommendations of expert planning inspectors, asserting, “Our client’s position is that the Secretary of State should not have overruled the recommendation of expert planning inspectors,” and noted the importance of balancing economic growth with climate obligations.

To bolster their legal efforts, LADACAN is engaging in a crowdfunding campaign through CrowdJustice. They aim to rally public support against the airport expansion, arguing that it poses significant challenges to environmental sustainability and impacts the wider community. As the legal proceedings unfold, the association remains committed to advocating for a more thorough examination of the expansion’s environmental consequences.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://ladacan.org/government-calls-in-luton-airport-expansion-plan/> - This page details LADACAN's opposition to the expansion of Luton Airport, highlighting concerns over noise pollution and environmental impacts, and their call for the government to refuse permission for further development.
2. <https://ladacan.org/consultation-on-futureluton-proposals/> - LADACAN's active opposition to the plan for massive further expansion of Luton Airport is discussed here, emphasizing the potential impact on quality of life and environmental concerns.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-63080979> - This BBC article reports on the inquiry into Luton Airport's expansion plans, mentioning LADACAN's opposition and concerns about rapid, unmitigated growth leading to increased noise and environmental impacts.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-63036301> - The BBC reports on the public inquiry into London Luton Airport's expansion plans, highlighting LADACAN's concerns about the council's role in granting planning permission and the need for balance between growth and mitigation.
5. <https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2021-12-02/we-didnt-feel-our-voice-was-heard-campaigners-to-fight-airport-expansion> - ITV News Anglia covers campaigners' reactions to the approval of Luton Airport's expansion, including LADACAN's intention to appeal the decision due to concerns over noise and environmental impact.
6. <https://www.airportwatch.org.uk/2023/03/luton-airport-expansion-plans-for-32-million-passengers-up-from-18-million-submitted/> - This article discusses the submission of Luton Airport's expansion plans, quoting LADACAN's spokesperson Andrew Lambourne expressing concerns about noise blight and the harms outweighing any possible benefits.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiswFBVV95cUxOdEthVnpQQnJ6NmJuVzVnaUFRejRFTjJkYXBIN2RsMlhsNHRmZDU2Tk8zRlppeXhrdW9xUUFGeUdhYThtZ2tHMVNLdFE1SGVIQXpBa01xSFlxQ1hUWHk2Um5BUnpjeHRpN0hjZ2RKQVh3ZmJzX1lNaHR6RkxaWW9JckVpemM5bUNxTHZZbVdERmZ3dzFuT2YtMk5aeGxQUzMtdloxXzl4d0FySnl1VjhUUVc5QQ?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data