

MENSTON PARISH COUNCIL - POSITION STATEMENT

Reference: Airspace Change Proposal

Despite assurances by LBA management and staff, as received by Menston residents and our representative on the Airport Consultative Committee, Menston Parish Council (MPC) remains to be convinced that the line drawn on the map relating to the airspace change will be the line that will actually be flown by operators and that it will be rigorously adhered to over time, by regulation and enforcement if necessary.

For the sake of absolute clarity, MPC sets out its position as follows:

- MPC is not opposed to the Airspace Change proposal per se nor in principle. Its concerns are based on Menston's close proximity to the airport, being the first community on the departure track from Runway 32, and a history of noise disturbance to residents, over 10 years and persisting.
- Some 80% of all flights depart from LBA via Runway 32 and then proceed through a channel, passing Menston only 3 minutes after take-off.
- It is accepted that only some 3% of flights deviate from that channel (which we know as the swathe) but, over the past 10 years, it is undeniable that flights tend to disperse and fan-out from the centre-line of that channel (as defined by the CAA in 2008). These deviations are the source of overflying (whether directly overhead or by close passage) and of noise disturbance to a significant number of Menston residents.
- MPC recognises that LBA is subject to planning conditions, which require flights to fly through the aforementioned channel across a predominantly agricultural Green Belt and unpopulated area. We wish to see those constraints continue and to be reinforced, thereby protecting Menston residents from aircraft noise, and the noted potential effects on health and the quality of life.
- MPC regards the protection of residents of the adjacent community of Burley-in-Wharfedale as equally important. For some 40 years, this has been assured by the designation of a Noise Preferential Routeing defined by a swathe and a centre-line through that swathe, and MPC views these protections as vital.
- The Airspace Change documentation states that, with the introduction of new technologies, flights will be able to fly a route more consistently and more accurately and, consequently, the noise generated will be more concentrated down that route. That makes it much more important that the new route follows the channel through the least populated area between Menston and Burley, and those flights do not disperse and fan-out during passage through that channel.
- MPC recognises that there has been limited construction within the CAA-designated channel (swathe) within the last 10 years. This is a circumstance out with MPC's or LBA's authority, and disturbance to residents of those homes (specifically), must remain a factor for the Local Planning Authority and purchasers of such properties (and their legal advisors) insofar as they have been constructed in the knowledge of the existence of the Noise Preferential Routeing.

- Menston residents are aware of LBA's aspirations to double (at least) its annual passenger throughput in the period to 2030, and that it will hope to maintain its growth beyond the period currently in forecast. Whilst MPC recognises that, the Airspace Change documentation considers this expansion an unrelated matter, residents of Menston need specific confirmation that any new route to be defined by this Airspace Change will accommodate future expansion - of whatever magnitude - without compromising the protections afforded by the Noise Preferential Routeing.
- MPC does not consider that LBA has, yet, provided the requisite degree of assurance that the flight line between Menston and Burley will replicate that, which was specified by the CAA and the Local Planning Authority (Leeds City Council) in 1993/4. In the absence of unequivocal reassurance, MPC is obligated to reflect the legitimate concerns of its resident population.
- If LBA can provide adequate reassurance over the long term and confirm that enforcement action will be taken against flights/operators which do not comply (except in defined circumstances such as safety considerations and the avoidance of weather systems) MPC will endorse the Airspace Change proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Finlay MBE
Chairman Menston Parish Council
4th January 2018