

How to effectively complain about aircraft noise

In February 2022, the aircraft stacking routes for Stanstead and London Luton Airport (LLA) were separated, resulting in increased noise over many South Cambs villages from planes flying into Luton. This change, known as “air deployment 6” (ad6) has also resulted in increased use of the airspace more generally. This guide shows how to make a complaint about aircraft noise from planes flying into LLA. Such complaints will have a direct bearing on whether the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) approve the change.

Step 1: How to email a complaint

The simplest option is to write an email to LLA, copying in the other parties which need to be made aware of the problem. Suggestions for typical content and recipients for Dry Drayton are shown below. People are encouraged to personalise this according to their own experiences.

To: noise.enquiries@ltn.aero (London Luton Airport)

CC: anthony.browne.mp@parliament.uk (Dry Drayton’s MP)

huw.merriman.mp@parliament.uk (Minister of State at the Department for Transport, MP Huw Merriman)

public.enquiries@nats.co.uk (National Air Traffic Services; NATS)

complaints@caa.co.uk (Civil Aviation Authority; CAA)

edna.murphy@cambridgeshire.gov.uk (Cambridgeshire County Council)

cllr.stobart@scambs.gov.uk (South Cambridgeshire District Council)

cllr.garvie@scambs.gov.uk (South Cambridgeshire District Council)

clerk@drydraytonpc.org.uk (Dry Drayton Parish Council)

info@relas.uk (RELAS facebook group)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: AD6 Aircraft Noise Complaint

Explain you are writing to complain about the noise from descending aircraft approaching Luton via the new AD6 route.

Explain where you have lived and for how long.

Explain how the tranquillity of this area has been affected by aircraft noise, for example:

- *The ambient background noise level has risen and drowned out peaceful rural sounds.*
- *Some planes appear to be throttling down causing a loud screeching sound.*
- *Aircraft noises are occurring at all hours, not just during the day.*

Explain how you have personally been affected, for example:

- You are annoyed by constant disruptions and find it hard to concentrate.
- You are forced to keep windows closed.
- You can no longer enjoy a peaceful garden.
- You are disturbed at night and find it difficult to sleep.
- You find it harder to hold meetings online when working from home due to background noise.

Explain your other concerns, for example:

- You feel the change has been imposed on you without any consultation.

Provide the times of some specific flights that disturbed you. If you do not have exact times, try to give an approximate time.

If attaching a screenshot of a specific incident from LLA's website (see step 2 below) then explain this.

Finish up by explaining you are copying the letter to other interested parties

Your name

Your address

Your email

Optionally, you can enhance this email by including a screenshot with flight data from LLA's website as explained in step 2).

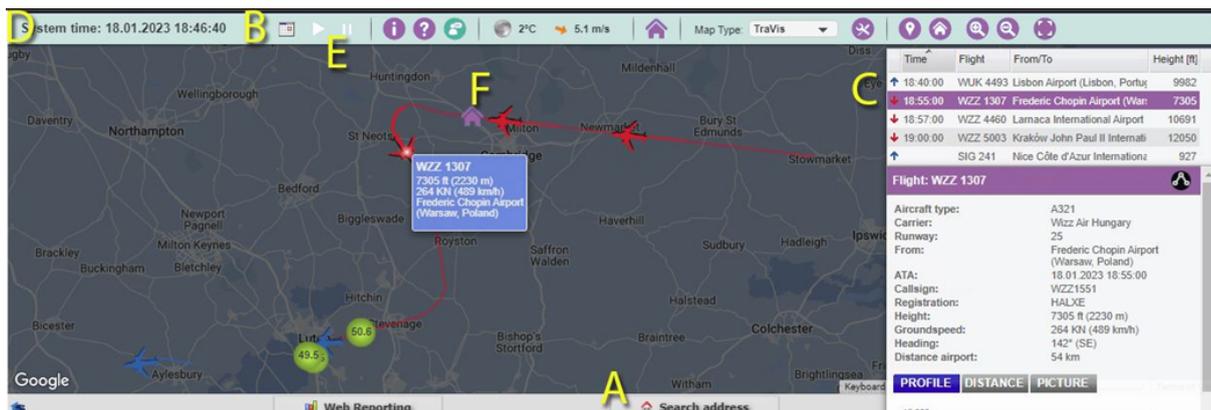
Step 2: Complaining to LLA using their website

LLA's website (<http://travisltn.topsonic.aero>) provides recorded flight data, delayed by 20 minutes, on a map and is a simple way to identify the flight(s) which caused a specific incident and to complain about them directly to LLA. Any such complaint should also be attached to an email and forwarded to other parties.

The following instructions show how to use the website on a desktop PC as it is difficult to use the website on a phone or tablet. The letters in brackets indicate where to find different items on the sample browser window shown at the bottom.

- 1) Open <http://travisltn.topsonic.aero> in a web browser.
- 2) Click on "Search address" at the bottom of the page (A). Enter the postcode and street number and click on "Search". This should put a house marker on the map. The map can be zoomed and dragged. Click on "Close".
- 3) Click on the Calendar icon at the top left (B) and enter the time of the incident (or a few minutes earlier). Click on "OK". The map now displays recorded rather than live data. On the right hand side is a list of flights around that time. Click on one of these.
- 4) The selected flight should now be displayed along with its route on the map (C). The "System time" in the top left (D) shows the time that is being displayed. It can be played forwards at different speeds using the "Replay Speed" control that appears at the top left (not shown). When the time of the incident to be reported has been identified (usually when it passed closest to your house) press the "Pause/Continue" button (E) in the top left to stop time.

- 5) Right click on your house marker (F), and left click on the “Start complaint” entry that appears. This then opens up a “New Complaint” box where you are invited to enter your name and address details. After entering these you can choose “Report a specific flight” which opens a new box.
- 6) In the new box you can specify the time and how you would like to be contacted as well as details of the incident. There is space to write a few sentences describing the issue and making it clear how it has affected you.
- 7) Take a screenshot of your browser window (using the snipping tool on windows) and save the resulting jpg file to attach to a complaints email later on. You can also use alt-PrtScn to copy the screen direct to the clipboard. This ensures there is an independent record of the complaint.



Step 3: Follow up complaints

While it is most important to ensure that your household makes at least one complaint if you are disturbed by noise, it is definitely worthwhile repeating the whole process for later disturbances.

In every case include details of the times when you were disturbed. Further emails could refer to your initial email and do not need to be the same length as the initial email (unless you feel like writing more).

The total number of complaints will assist in indicating the magnitude of the problem to all the parties that receive it. This evidence will be useful to assess the size of the problem during the final review process.