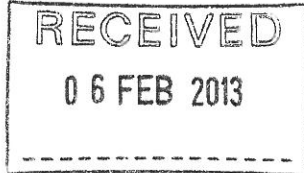




Department for
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- 1 FEB 2013

Dear Cllr Linacre

Thank you for your letter dated 21 January to the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, and the Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, regarding the planning application to expand Luton Airport. I have been asked to reply.

As you may be aware, a small proportion of applications that an authority resolves to allow have to be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 to see whether or not he wishes to call them in for his own decision. He only calls in applications normally where issues of more than local importance are involved. The Secretary of State can also decide to call in the application for his own decision regardless of whether the application is formally referred to him or not but this application is only in the early stages of consideration by the Council.

I hope you will understand that I cannot comment on the merits of your arguments because I must avoid prejudicing the Secretary of State's role should the application be referred to him or should an appeal be made against a refusal of permission.

I will ensure, however, that your views are taken fully into account should the application be referred to the Secretary of State.

With best wishes

Nick Boles

NICK BOLES MP