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Airport Expansion. A Regional Issue

For many years local community groups living in proximity to Nottingham East Midlands Airport and regionally based environmental groups, have been challenging the powerful aviation sector.

In some areas these groups have been enormously successful, particularly in exposing the debilitating effects that airport operations have upon communities and the environment. In other areas the power and the influence of this industry is difficult to challenge, especially with regard to the financial importance of aviation to the regional economy.

Individual community groups have made enormous inroads in making sure that those in positions of power are listening to their concerns and to communicate those concerns with government. Environmental groups have started to open the debate with regional decision makers about the negative impacts that the aviation sector may have not only upon our environment but upon our regional economy, in terms of its impacts upon local tourism and unfair competition with more sustainable industries.

All airports have a huge local footprint which spreads far away from the actual runway. Indeed the runway has to be seen as the catalyst for a plethora of consequences. These include increased land take for terminals, offices, hotels, and industrial developments as well as car parks and ever wider (or even new) roads and railways. There is a huge impact upon biodiversity, water courses and landscape, increased noise and air pollution, and an impact upon quality of life in many communities.

Thus it is undoubtedly the case that the impact of an airport extends far beyond the local surroundings; indeed it is an industry that has global impacts, including its contribution to climate changing emissions. For this reason it is vital that groups, organisations and individuals across the East Midlands work together to challenge the unsustainable and negative impacts of this industry. Individually we have made valuable progress, but together we may be successful in ensuring that our people and our environment are protected.