

Dear all,

Blackwater Valley Friends of the Earth (BVFoE) would like to raise our concerns about the process of the current Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC) public consultation regarding the planning application submitted by Farnborough Airport (25/000615/REV) on 14 November 2025.

On 18 November Farnborough Aerodrome Consultative Committee (FACC) members were emailed approximately an hour before the FACC meeting that day to let them know that the application had been submitted and was on the RBC planning portal. On 20 November RBC Councillors received a letter from Simon Geere, CEO of Farnborough Airport Limited, informing them of the new application. On 21 November RBC posted on social media alerting some residents (who have access to the internet and follow RBC) about the application and there was also a press release. RBC has sent out a letter to residents who live close to the airport and who will be most impacted by the increase in flights and the increase in the number of larger planes allowed to use the airport on non-weekdays, alerting them to the changes and how to respond to the consultation. Some people were still receiving those letters as late as the first week of December, although it was dated 21 November. On, or around, 5 December RBC contacted other local authorities and major stakeholders to request their response to the application.

We would firstly like to ask if these dates comply with the statutory planning regulations in terms of the required notice residents and consultees should be given?

If they are compliant, we would like to point out that they are completely insufficient and not in the spirit of open and transparent communication that the current Labour administration committed to when they came to power in May 2025. There are over 2,500 pages of documents associated with this application on the RBC planning portal. How are residents, local businesses, other local authorities and stakeholders meant to read and understand these documents (some of which are highly technical) in the time we have been given – and then make an informed response?

Giving neighbouring local authorities 25 days to respond to the consultation, even if that is the statutory requirement, during December when they may not even have the relevant committees or meetings scheduled, is also not in the spirit of collaborative consultation on this issue – which we note that several local authorities have had reason to complain about even within the last year, Waverley Borough Council being one notable example. Residents of Waverley having been increasingly impacted by Farnborough Airport traffic since the change of airspace in 2022.

The closing date for submissions is 30 December, so at least 7 days of the consultation are during the commonly accepted 'Christmas period' when most people will be taking time off and relaxing with their friends and families.

Many people, including members of BVFoE believe there should be some in-person consultation sessions (like the airport held in 2023) so that people have the opportunity to ask questions.

In conclusion, we ask that RBC commits to extending the consultation period by at least 2 weeks to mitigate for the impact of the timing of this consultation, to holding some in-person consultation sessions in the New Year and to treating your residents and their environment with the respect we deserve.

We look forward to receiving an urgent response,

Sarah Wood
Coordinator Blackwater Valley Friends of the Earth