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| For his assessment of the impact on residents of south and east Belfast should the cap be lifted on passenger numbers at George Best Belfast City Airport. **Organisation:**Environment  **Source:**Northern Ireland - NIA Written Answers Booklet  **Date:** 07.04.14  Mr Alex Maskey  To ask the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the impact on residents of south and east Belfast should the cap be lifted on passenger numbers at George Best Belfast City Airport. [AQO 5911/11-15]   **Answer:**  The Airport has formally submitted a request to the Department to vary the terms of the existing Planning Agreement to remove the Seats for Sale limit and replace it with a noise control contour cap.  The Department has not yet formed an opinion on the merits of the Airport's proposals which will be subject to an independent public inquiry to be held by the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC). The potential impact on residents will ultimately depend on the size of the noise control contour which is finally agreed between the Department and the Airport following the inquiry. This control will, if agreed, operate in tandem with other restrictions and obligations that currently operate at the Airport.  It is the Department's intention to adopt a neutral stance at the public inquiry, pending the outcome. The purpose of the inquiry is to facilitate an open and informed debate and to allow the PAC to report on the evidence presented. Residents of south and east Belfast may wish to participate in the process. The inquiry will, among other things, consider the impact of noise on the local population.  I will make a final decision on if, and how the Planning Agreement should be modified following careful consideration of the PAC's findings. |

07/04/2014 [AQO 5911/11-15]

07 April 2014