

The Planning Inspectorate  
National Infrastructure Applications Team  
Temple Quay House  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

FAO: Kevin Gleeson (Lead Member of the Examining Authority)

31 January 2024

Dear Mr Gleeson,

**Application for a Development Consent Order by Gatwick Airport Limited for the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project (Ref. TR020005) – Response to a Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority under section 89(3) of the Planning Act 2008**

We are writing in response to your Procedural Decision letter of 24 October 2023 [PD-006] in which the Examining Authority requested further information in relation to the implications of updated guidance (*TAG Unit M4: Forecasting and Uncertainty (May 2023)*) on the assessments. The Applicant provided a programme and proposed approach to accounting for Covid-19 in the transport modelling in the letter dated 14 November 2023 [AS-073], with further detail included within this submission.

**Technical Note – Accounting for Covid-19 in the Transport Modelling**

On 31 May 2023, an update to *TAG Unit M4 – Forecasting and Uncertainty*<sup>1</sup> was released by the DfT and included reference (in Appendix B of the guidance) to considerations for scheme promoters in relation to the treatment of COVID-19 impacts.

**Accounting for Covid-19 in the Transport Modelling** (Doc Ref. 8.5) provides a detailed explanation of how the Applicant has approached this guidance through a series of supplementary sensitivity tests which help to identify the potential implications for the assessment in the DCO Application should the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel behaviour be sustained. The technical note outlines the guidance and the approach adopted in reviewing the modelling and summarises the results from this work.

The analysis shows that the impacts of the Project in the sensitivity tests are similar to those presented in the DCO Application, and often reduced, particularly from a highway magnitude of impact perspective, given the lower forecast levels of traffic and congestion levels. The analysis suggests that the assessment of the with Project effects in the DCO Application are potentially conservative and form a robust basis under which to consider the transport related impacts of the scheme.

This work has also shown that the M23 Spur corridor sees small reductions in total traffic flow in the sensitivity testing compared to the DCO Application, and thus confirms the robustness of the VISSIM modelling contained in the DCO Application. Small reductions are also seen in the Gatwick Airport station

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<sup>1</sup> Transport Appraisal Guidance – Unit M4 – forecasting and uncertainty. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tag-unit-m4-forecasting-and-uncertainty>

entry and exit flows in the sensitivity testing compared to the DCO Application, which demonstrates the robustness of the Legion modelling.

For completeness, GAL is also considering the outputs of this post-Covid sensitivity test in the context of those topics in the Environmental Statement which rely upon the transport modelling. GAL will provide the ExA with further information on this at the earliest opportunity in the Examination.

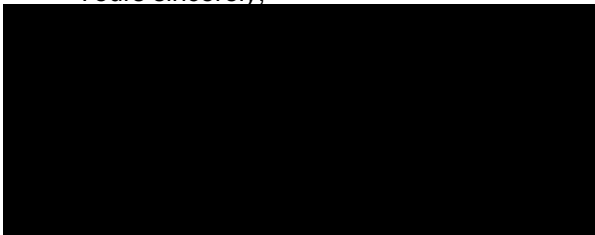
**Submission of Updated and Additional Documents**

The table below sets out the updated application documents and additional documents submitted as part of this response for ease of reference, including the reason for submission. A revised Navigation Document will be submitted at Procedural Deadline A (6 February 2024).

Updated or Additional Document	Document Title and Reference	Reason for Submission
New	Accounting for Covid-19 in the Transport Modelling (Doc Ref. 8.5)	To respond to the Examining Authority’s request for further information regarding the impacts of an update to <i>TAG Unit M4 – Forecasting and Uncertainty</i> .
New	Accounting for Covid-19 in the Transport Modelling - Appendices (Doc Ref. 8.5)	

If the Applicant can be of any further assistance or the Examining Authority considers any further clarification is required in response to the information and documentation submitted as part of this response, please do not hesitate to contact the Applicant using the details already provided.

Yours sincerely,



**Jonathan Deegan**  
**NRP Programme Lead**  
**Gatwick Airport Limited**

Enclosed separately:

- Accounting for Covid-19 in the Transport Modelling (Doc Ref. 8.5)
- Accounting for Covid-19 in the Transport Modelling - Appendices (Doc Ref. 8.5)