



**CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
WRITTEN REPRESENTATION**

**APPLICATION BY GATWICK AIRPORT LIMITED FOR AN ORDER
GRANTING DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FOR THE GATWICK AIRPORT
NORTHERN RUNWAY PROJECT**

(PINS REFERENCE. TR020005)

IP Reference GATW-AFP107

March 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out Crawley Borough Council's (CBC) Written Representation (WR) on the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) on land at Gatwick Airport that would involve the bringing into routine use of the current standby runway as an operational "northern runway" and associated development, hereafter, referred to as the 'Project'.
- 1.2 CBC is a 'Host Authority' as the majority of the land within the Order boundary falls within the borough. CBC is the main Local Planning Authority for the Airport.
- 1.3 CBC has contributed to the preparation of the West Sussex Local Impact Report (LIR) with West Sussex County Council, Horsham District Council and Mid Sussex District Council. The LIR is a detailed technical report focussing on the environmental, social and economic impacts raised by the proposed development and which summarises the positive, neutral, and negative impacts of the Project. It also sets out the additional mitigations CBC considers are necessary to mitigate the negative impacts and to secure positive benefits for the borough. This WR should be read in conjunction with the LIR. In addition, CBC has also prepared a Principal Areas of Disagreement Summary Statement (PADSS), a copy of which has already been submitted to the Examining Authority (ExA).
- 1.4 CBC has also summarised its concerns with the DCO application within its Relevant Representation (RR) submitted in October 2023
- 1.5 CBC has been liaising with the Applicant over the Project for a lengthy period, providing detailed responses to all statutory pre-application consultations. CBC is continuing to engage with the Applicant to progress the draft S106 Agreement and the evolving Statement of Common Ground (SoCG). Further engagement on these will take place throughout the DCO examination process.
- 1.6 CBC has used PINS Advice Note 2: The Role of Local Authorities in the Development Consent Process (February 2015) to inform the drafting of the WR. This states that a written representation is the most appropriate document for the local authority to set out its view on the application, i.e. whether or not it supports the application and its reasons. It is noted that once the WR has been submitted it cannot be withdrawn, although CBC reserves the right to submit further representations during the examination process.

2. Summary of key issues

- 2.1 CBC and other Local Authorities had raised concerns regarding the meaningfulness of the Applicant's handling of pre-application consultation and engagement, including the lack of detailed information supporting the consultations previously carried out. This was set out by the Authorities in their Joint Adequacy of Consultation report. These shortcomings appear to have continued with regard to

the recent consultation on the proposed changes to the DCO and concerns about this are also reflected in CBC's response to the Applicant's recent consultation.

- 2.2 CBC maintains its fundamental concerns regarding the extent and robustness of the assessment work undertaken within the DCO submission across a range of topics, including defective baseline assessments and a lack of published information. CBC therefore believes there are fundamental flaws in the conclusions that the Applicant has brought forward to justify its DCO application. These include:
 - 2.2.1 The Applicant's inability to present an appropriate need/capacity case for progressing the Northern Runway Proposals including issues with the aircraft sequencing, the bottom-up demand approach adopted giving rise to over optimistic forecasts of capacity and therefore of the derived economic benefits arising from such growth, with resulting significant consequential impacts on mitigation triggers.
 - 2.2.2 The lack of evidence of specific measures to demonstrate that the various targets set by the Applicant can be met or that mitigations can be achieved e.g surface access targets or other environmental parameters associated with noise and air quality.
- 2.3 CBC considers that the Applicant is offering wholly insufficient funding to support action plans (or outline action plans) intended to deliver the targets used to substantiate the proposals such as the surface access targets, the employment, skills and business aspirations for the local economy, air quality action plans or an effective noise envelope.
- 2.4 The West Sussex LIR identifies wide ranging negative impacts across all topic areas. CBC is also of the view that the scope and scale of mitigations or compensation proposed are wholly insufficient to overcome the expected adverse impacts arising from the proposals. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are some economic benefits arising from the scheme, even these give rise to concerns particularly regarding how they can be secured for the local community which the CBC believes that the Applicant has fallen well short of addressing. This in turn undermines the ability for CBC to weigh such benefits positively against the wide ranging negative environmental and social impacts arising such as those topics cited previously.
- 2.5 The control mechanisms set out in the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) and its supporting control documents are not sufficiently detailed, effective, or enforceable, with much being left to subsequent approvals or discharge of requirements. There has to date been limited discussion or engagement with the Applicant about the resources, timings and costs involved with addressing these matters.

- 2.6 Of particular concern, is the lack of sanction against the Applicant should the continued growth of the airport envisaged by GAL give rise to consequences which exceed expected environmental parameters without any clear accountability to the Local Authorities or the local community. CBC believes there should be effective and robust thresholds to prevent further growth of air traffic movements should the airport growth give rise to any anticipated or actual exceedance of such thresholds. This would be most effective in controlling air and ground noise, air quality, surface access modal shift and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2.7 There appears to be a lack of clarity on the approach to be taken as regards the identification, management, enforcement and where necessary, the funding of local impact mitigation given the longevity of the operation of the proposals and the potential for circumstances and potential impacts to change over time.
- 2.8 Additionally, the DCO proposals do not recognise the opportunities for improving sustainable links and connectivity beyond the confines of the airport and its immediate environs including active travel, recreation, ecological and landscape connections.
- 2.9 Similarly, the significant felling of trees arising from the proposals has not been fully assessed nor is there acknowledgement of the need for adequate compensation through replanting and/or compensation through contributions to off-site replacement as expected through adopted Local Plan policy and reinforced by the government's new Environment Act legislation, which passed into law in November 2021.
- 2.10 CBC is also concerned that there would be significant future resource implications for the discharge of all the Requirements within the deadlines expected by the applicant, increased further by the required monitoring responsibilities associated with the DCO. The Council would expect full remuneration to resource these additional demands, as well as associated agreements to ensure appropriate and fully funded pre-requirement discharge discussions take place.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 There are significant concerns regarding the adequacy of many of the assessments undertaken by the Applicant to justify its development proposals.
- 3.2 As a consequence, major adverse impacts have been identified across a wide range of topic areas as set out in the West Sussex LIR including on noise, air quality, highways and transportation, landscape and others.

- 3.3 There is significant uncertainty regarding future economic benefits to the borough's residents and insufficient confidence in how these will be secured and delivery guaranteed.
- 3.4 CBC believes there is a significant gap in expectations between it and the Applicant regarding the scope and scale of environmental mitigations and community compensation commensurate with the likely adverse impacts arising from the proposed development as identified in the West Sussex LIR.
- 3.5 Given the above, CBC's current position remains as a holding objection to the DCO proposals as it believes the evidence does not currently exist to demonstrate that the Airport can grow and be operated in a responsible manner which contains its adverse environmental impacts within prescribed acceptable, agreed and enforceable limits.
- 3.6 CBC is willing to engage with the Examination Panel and the Applicant to review and agree data, to analyse additional information and, where necessary, to co-design any additional or altered controls, mitigations and obligations with a view to making the proposed development more acceptable in planning terms. It also wishes to agree with the Applicant issues relating to timing and delivery requirements along with comprehensive resourcing for the council in the event the DCO is granted.