

I'm Victoria Chester, a Horley Town, and Reigate & Banstead Borough, Councillor for Horley East & Salfords.

As a Green Party Councillor for Horley, my home of 20 years and the town most impacted by this project, I feel my responsibility is to assess objectively what is best for our local residents. This sits alongside my own personal concerns about the climate impacts of Gatwick's plans.

Local people have been sold a story by GAL, of new jobs and economic growth, and at a time of financial struggle, this story has seemed compelling.

They tell me about the thousands of jobs they've been led to believe the project will bring, but, in reality, jobs earmarked for the Borough only number in the hundreds.

Airports are increasingly automated, with lower-end wages falling by a quarter in recent decades, and most of these new jobs will provide incomes nowhere near enough to afford the average house in Horley. We already have a shortage of affordable housing here (and do we really want any more houses built on floodplains?)

Unemployment rates in the borough are low, and Gatwick can't fill the vacancies it already has. Since being dumped during the pandemic people haven't flocked back to the airline industry - the future there is uncertain and Horley residents need a better foundation on which to build their lives.

So, what will we get...

- Loads more traffic - congestion, noise, pollution, road damage - can you imagine the potholes!
- Even worse nuisance parking, already a huge problem in this area
- Increased risk of flooding, water shortages, sewage overflows (Horley Works are at capacity, now frequently spilling raw sewage onto public land)

Plus all the many other impacts of an airport trying to double its size to that of Heathrow.

What really upsets me, is that people have been given an unclear picture, and don't truly understand the impact this is going to have; the impact of:

- A 15 year construction period, minimum - that's nearly a generation's worth of disruption
- a 3rd lane to the London Road, with a widened bridge and major roundabout extension
- Land acquisition, and construction vehicle access roads through residential areas
- Lack of adequate protection against increased noise and air pollution from more aircraft, more traffic and a massive construction project
- No formal assessment of the harm caused to residents living by the 2 huge building sites.
- Loss of green space, mature woodland, and crucial treeline buffers that'll take 30 years to replenish.

- Highly used, active travel routes to the airport, through Riverside, blocked
- Our beloved parks, chopped up and left unusable during construction - South Horley has little amenity space and this will be lost for years

The list goes on...

People don't realise because, quite frankly, GAL didn't really tell them. Most residents didn't even know there was a consultation, let alone understand the crucial details.

And the reasons for needing to expand just don't stack up... passenger numbers aren't back up to where they were pre-pandemic, and most of the increase is in holiday travel - not the business flights GAL says will bring in all the money.

So, why is GAL even doing this? Who is this project really for? Not local residents, not airport workers.. only a tiny minority will truly benefit - those right at the top - the highest earners and the shareholders.

If I really thought this project would, on balance, benefit Horley I would concede so - but it doesn't. We don't need this expansion. We shouldn't even be considering it, and we shouldn't be allowing residents to be misled into supporting it.

I object to this application. Thank you.