

Presentation by Robert Basto (on behalf of Kate Lockey).

Hello, I'm Rob Basto, a resident of Reigate. I'm opposing the expansion of Gatwick Airport because of the climate impact and the growth impact.

Regarding the climate impact, I oppose the expansion on the grounds that it will increase our carbon and related emissions that will exacerbate the climate crisis. This alone is ample reason to reject the application, and many arguments have already been made in this respect. This is about acknowledging the reality of the situation - that our future survival is at stake. Currently we are relatively little affected by extremes of weather, but the science is clear. Drought, floods, heat, wildfires, and associated issues such as food shortages will inevitably affect us here. Our actions now will determine the severity of future effects.

On the topic of growth, growth associated with the expansion of the airport will be detrimental for a number of reasons. For example an increased workforce would put increased strain on already inadequate housing and health services, would increase traffic congestion and put additional strain on our train services.

Demand for flights is not going to go away. Even if the number of flights allowed in the future should be cut due to emission targets I see no reason why Gatwick management, with proper planning, should not be able to still have a profitable business. They have no need to expand, and indeed have a social responsibility to push for reductions.

Planning for the future can be about the wellbeing of the general population and future generations. We need a society that is stable, resilient, secure and without fear for the future. Expanding Gatwick would counter all these.

As aircraft become quieter and more fuel efficient, let us not use this as justification for expansion. Instead, keeping aircraft and passenger numbers stable or reduced would result in improved quality of life for the area: less noise and better air quality.

We have a finite world, yet an insatiable appetite for growth is encouraged. We need to cut use of fossil fuels and there is currently no realistic alternative for airlines. We need to stop destroying nature and allow room for it to recover. Let us focus on quality of life, a stable, sustainable and secure future, and make planning decisions based on that.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.