

SUBMISSION TO GATWICK PLANNING INSPECTORATE

Thursday May 2nd 2024

My name is Dirk Campbell, I am a Green Town Councillor in Lewes, East Sussex. My concern is as a resident of Planet Earth likely to be affected by the consequences of increased CO₂ emissions from extra air traffic.

Gatwick business management is asking for a third runway on the basis that there will be a significant increase in passenger numbers over the next ten or twenty years. In other words they are basing their projections on a linear continuation of current consumer demand.

This assumption is misplaced, as I hope to demonstrate. Firstly though, I will offer you some respite from the torrent of opinion and fact to which you are being subjected, by posing three questions, all of which have the same fundamental answer, and which I hope you will find intriguing.

Why did Mallorca become Britain's favourite package holiday destination? Why did veganism go from being certifiably insane to a standard menu option in every self-respecting restaurant? And why did the popular car-buying choice change from cars resembling racing cars to clunky-looking off-road vehicles?

I will give you some background. In 1977 a management consultancy named Butler Cox decided to investigate the underlying causes of consumer trends so as to predict future consumer behaviour for their clients. Their investigations led them to divide society up into three groups: 'inner-directed', 'outer-directed' and 'subsistence'.¹

The subsistence group is 'just about managing', concerned simply with getting by on a day-to-day basis. The outer-directed group, by far the largest group, is concerned with aspiration, conspicuous consumption, following the trends. The inner-directed group is concerned with quality of life, curiosity, new experience and ethical considerations.

What Butler Cox found was that the outer-directed group's consumer behaviour was anticipated by the inner-directed group by ten to twenty years. Mallorca became Britain's most popular holiday destination after Robert Graves moved there and attracted a community of artists, poets and musicians. Drivers who wanted to explore off the beaten track bought Landrovers. Nowadays every third vehicle you see on the road is an SUV – though they aren't driven off-road, that would involve getting the car dirty, but you get the point. Vegans want to eat healthily and minimise their impact on the planetary environment. These are all inner-directed lifestyle and consumer patterns which have spread into the mainstream.

So you may be wondering: what are inner-directed consumer habits today when it comes to flying? Their primary concern today is the climate and ecological emergency. They have largely stopped flying altogether because of the damaging

¹ [REDACTED]

impact of air transport on the environment, the climate and on air quality. Sustainable Aviation Fuel, battery-powered aircraft and the like are seen as impossible techno-fixes by anyone who looks seriously into the matter. As the inner-directed group are primarily Guardian readers, that is the opinion they mostly hold.

Second point: economic growth forecasts. The UK economy has been static for sixteen years and will continue the same into the foreseeable future. It is specious to claim that adding a third runway to Gatwick will help stimulate the economy. Multi-millionaire former city trader Gary Stevenson has been making economic predictions since 2010, all of which have proved accurate. He has been predicting for some time that the middle and working classes will get steadily poorer and more resource-stressed over the next decades as the super-rich convert their increasing wealth into assets. The less well-off are having to realise their assets in order to get by, which means selling their house (if they have one) to the property-banking wealthy, which means house prices will continue to rise. Which in turn means that the less well-off will not be prioritising air travel as a leisure option, increasingly.²

Consequently it is safe to predict that, contrary to what you will be confidently told by the Gatwick corporation, there is unlikely to be enough increased demand in the leisure air transport sector over the next ten or twenty years to justify a third runway at Gatwick.

Third point, and this is a short one: a poll of air passengers was carried out over three hours in the arrivals area of Gatwick on April 13th. 90% of participating passengers were against a third runway. That is an overwhelming majority of opinion. The national vote to leave the EU was 52% of participating voters, and this tiny majority was regarded as binding by the British government. A massive majority vote by air travellers at Gatwick against a third runway should be regarded by the Planning Inspectorate as, if not binding, at least persuasive.³

Thank you.

² [REDACTED]

³ The poll was carried out by means of a large board divided into columns denoting preferences. Participants placed sticky dots in the column of their choice. The board was photographed at the time. It is available to be shown to the Planning Inspectorate on request.