

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

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

25 June 2024

Dear Mr Gleeson,

Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project (TR020005) – Response to Mole Valley DC letter

The ExA has accepted a submission from Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) dated 20 June 2024, submitted following the close of last week's hearings (link [here](#)).

This criticises the Applicant - Gatwick Airport (GAL) for allegedly withholding information from the examination and negatively impacting MVDC's ability to participate in the hearings and the examination process. GAL considers the allegations made by MVDC are unfounded and for the avoidance of any doubt, sets out here the reasons for this view.

- **ISH 7: Future Baseline** - The Applicant has previously explained its position in respect of the scope of the 'Future Baseline' agenda item under 'Other Environmental Matters'¹. It had anticipated that the agenda item was to be focussed on the approach to considering the future baseline in the context of environmental impact and transport assessments and consequently did not have the necessary operational forecasting and capacity experts available on the day. The issues raised by the ExA on the future baseline were therefore dealt with fully in writing at Deadline 4.
- **ISH 7: Project Change** - It is incorrect to maintain that the Applicant withheld information regarding the proposed introduction of an on-site waste-water treatment works from ISH7. GAL had clearly signalled to the ExA and all Interested Parties that the inclusion of an on-site facility was a possibility in its response to the ExA Q1 WE.1.8 and discussion was held at ISH7 regarding this potential change to the DCO in response to submissions from CAGNE. The decision to pursue the change had not yet been made at the time of the hearing as this was dependent on the nature of the Thames Water representations to be made at that hearing and a subsequent GAL board approval being sought once it was clear that the Thames Water representations had not removed the perceived risk on the management of future waste-water flows. The notification of the change request was submitted as soon as possible after the GAL board decision, to enable public consultation to commence and the maximum amount of time possible to be available in the examination for the ExA and Interested Parties to scrutinise the new proposal. It is not considered that any party has been prejudiced as a result.

¹ Please see Section 7 of **The Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions: ISH – Other Environmental Matters** [\[REP4-033\]](#)

- **ISH 8: Car Parking Data** - GAL acknowledges and apologies for the errata identified within the car parking figures in its response to the Rule 17 letter [[REP4-019](#)]. The error was identified by GAL the evening prior to the hearing and therefore there was insufficient time to notify the ExA or Interested Parties in advance. Further detail on the nature of the error is explained in **The Applicant's Response to ISH8: Car Parking** (Doc Ref. 10.50.2) with a corrected version of the response letter submitted at Deadline 6 (Doc Ref. 10.21 v2). The correction provided in the updated table simply reconfirms and supports the basis for the numbers advocated for by GAL, rather than constituting 'new information' or a change in position.
- **ISH 8: Noise Envelope** - In respect of the amendment to the size of the noise envelope, GAL made this concession in good faith at the outset of the hearing in the expectation that parties would welcome this concession, and thereby avoid valuable time being wasted on debating the Slower Fleet Transition case, instead allowing discussions in the hearing to be focussed on all other aspects of the proposed noise envelope, the vast majority of which were unaffected by the change to the size of the envelope.

GAL has explained that the change was proposed in response to representations from Interested Parties (including Mole Valley) made at Deadline 5 on 6 June (not Deadline 4 as MVDC assert) but that the GAL board approval to allow this change was only received late on Friday 14 June, just before the hearing on 18 June. GAL therefore informed the examination of the change at the earliest opportunity it had to do so.

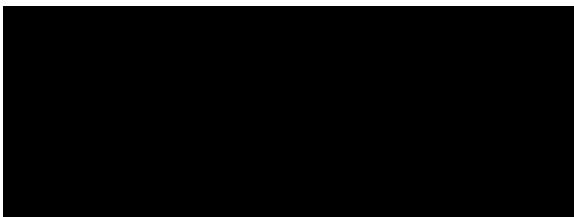
GAL does not accept that advancing a stricter noise envelope demonstrates any failure to respect the engagement process, particularly in the light of the extensive history of consultation that was explained at the hearing. Rather, GAL considers that the proposal for a stricter envelope shows that the consultation process has worked effectively, and that GAL had responded appropriately and positively to concerns raised by Interested Parties.

The ExA will note that an equivalent concession by the Luton Airport applicant came at the penultimate deadline (circa one week prior to the close of examination), following the ExA's comments on the draft DCO.

GAL is grateful to the ExA for its indication that it would be acceptable to communicate any similar issues directly to the case team if they arise between deadlines. GAL had not previously understood that this was possible, as requests to make submissions between deadlines earlier in the examination had not been accepted.

GAL hopes the above provides the necessary context to the matters raised by MVDC and some assurance, particularly to the ExA, as to the Applicant's good faith approach to this examination and its ongoing good intentions.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Deegan
NRP Programme Lead
Gatwick Airport Limited