



Dear Planning Inspectorate,

Subject: Objection to Gatwick Airport's DCO Application - Impact on Slaugham Parish and Surrounding Villages

I am writing on behalf of the Slaugham Parish Council and its residents to formally object to the Development Consent Order (DCO) submitted by Gatwick Airport Limited for the proposed Northern Runway project.

Our objection is grounded in significant concerns about the adverse impacts the project will have on our community, particularly in terms of flight path changes, environmental pollution, and overall quality of life.

1. Increased Noise Pollution:

The proposed use of the northern runway will result in significant alterations to existing flight paths, bringing them directly over Slaugham Parish and its neighboring villages. The increase in air traffic, particularly at lower altitudes, will lead to a marked rise in noise pollution. This will disrupt the peace and tranquility that our residents currently enjoy and will have a detrimental impact on the mental and physical well-being of our community.

- **Data on Expected Noise Levels:** According to studies on airport expansions, noise pollution can increase significantly with the introduction of additional runways. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) reports that the noise contours around airports can expand, affecting a greater number of people. Specifically, aircraft noise can disturb sleep, cause cardiovascular issues, and decrease quality of life ([West Sussex County Council](#)).
- **Impact on Local Residents:** Research from the World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that long-term exposure to noise levels above 55 decibels can lead to adverse health outcomes, including hypertension and ischemic heart disease. You can refer to studies that show similar impacts in communities near other major airports, like Heathrow ([West Sussex County Council](#)).

2. Air Quality and Environmental Concerns:

The expansion of operations at Gatwick Airport will inevitably result in increased air pollution. The villages within Slaugham Parish, currently surrounded by natural landscapes, will experience a decline in air quality due to the heightened emissions from increased aircraft movements. This poses a serious health risk to residents, especially vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly. Additionally, the environmental degradation resulting from increased pollution will harm local wildlife and green spaces, which are integral to the character of our area.

- **Emissions from Increased Air Traffic:** Increased air traffic from a new runway will lead to higher emissions of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). According to a study by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), areas near major airports already struggle with air quality standards. This is exacerbated when flight operations increase, leading to higher concentrations of pollutants that can affect respiratory health ([West Sussex County Council](#)).
- **Impact on Vulnerable Groups:** The UK Government's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) has documented the serious health risks posed by increased levels of NO₂ and particulate matter, particularly for children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions.
- **Environmental and Ecological Impact:**
 - **Loss of Green Spaces:** The expansion may lead to the loss or degradation of green spaces around Slaugham Parish, which serve as carbon sinks and habitats for local wildlife. Natural England's reports on biodiversity and green spaces stress the importance of protecting these areas to maintain ecological balance and community well-being ([West Sussex County Council](#)).
 - **Impact on Local Wildlife:** The increased noise, light, and air pollution can disrupt the habitats of local fauna, particularly in conservation areas. Species that rely on these habitats might be forced to relocate, leading to a loss of biodiversity in the area.



3. Impact on Community and Heritage:

The villages within Slaugham Parish are rich in history and heritage, with numerous conservation areas and listed buildings. The noise and pollution from the proposed runway expansion threaten the preservation of these cultural assets. The increased air traffic will detract from the historical and rural character of our villages, potentially diminishing their appeal to both residents and visitors.

- **Impact on Historical Sites:** Slaugham Parish includes several listed buildings and conservation areas that could be adversely affected by increased air traffic. The National Trust has previously voiced concerns about the impact of airport expansions on heritage sites, noting that vibrations from frequent low-altitude flights can damage fragile structures ([West Sussex County Council](#)).
- **Economic Impact:** The rural and historical character of Slaugham Parish attracts tourists and supports local businesses. A decrease in visitors due to noise and pollution could harm the local economy. Studies have shown that similar disruptions near other UK airports have led to a decline in property values and local tourism.

4. Lack of Adequate Mitigation:

While we acknowledge that Gatwick Airport Limited has proposed some mitigation measures, we believe these are insufficient to offset the negative impacts on our community. The proposed noise insulation schemes and environmental safeguards do not adequately address the scale of disruption that will be caused. Furthermore, there has been a lack of meaningful engagement with affected communities, leading to a sense of disenfranchisement among our residents.

Inadequate Mitigation Measures:

- **Insufficient Noise Insulation:** The proposed noise insulation measures may not fully protect residents, especially in older homes that are harder to insulate effectively. A study by the University of Southampton highlighted that many noise mitigation measures do not fully offset the impacts of aircraft noise on well-being.
- **Lack of Engagement:** Despite the statutory consultation process, many residents feel their concerns have not been adequately addressed. Referencing local surveys or community feedback could illustrate the extent of local opposition and dissatisfaction with the proposed mitigation measures.

Conclusion:

Given the significant and far-reaching impacts of the Northern Runway project on Slaugham Parish and its surrounding villages, we urge the Planning Inspectorate to reject the DCO application. The well-being of our community, the preservation of our environment, and the protection of our heritage must be prioritised over the commercial interests of the airport.

We strongly recommend that alternative solutions be explored that do not disproportionately affect rural communities like ours.

Thank you for considering our objections. We hope that our concerns will be given the serious consideration they deserve.

Yours faithfully

Miss Sally Mclean - Clerk and Finance Officer
Slaugham Parish Council