

I would like to outline my ongoing surprise and dismay at the arrogant and dismissive way which GAL has entered into this process and engaged with it. GAL is an entirely commercial operation. It is there to make a profit. It's that simple. It has engaged in an examination process and understands only too well the need to answer questions and address concerns. Yet on too many occasions to list here, GAL has not answered or addressed very valid questions and concerns, whether these have been raised by individuals, by GACC, by CAGNE, by the JLAs or other bodies, nor has its public consultation been adequate.

As a commercial organisation which stands to make many millions, if not billions, of pounds from the consent to expand being granted, I think this kind of behaviour is nothing short of unacceptable.

Residents' council tax money has had to be spent by strapped for cash local authorities in constantly chasing for answers and dealing with no replies from GAL when that money would be much better used delivering the best services of residents. This degree of arrogance displayed by GAL should neither be allowed nor rewarded. The ExA has a duty to protect public money and uphold the law and the agreed procedure.

A small example of this is from the WSCC Adequacy of Consultation Representation, July 2023 which states:

"It is disappointing that there has been so little positive engagement by the Applicant, which has resulted in WSCC still having outstanding technical issues for which no feedback has been provided; this is over 18 months since the first round of consultation. Further details and examples of documents/additional information requested by WSCC can be found in Appendix E of the Authorities' Adequacy of Consultation Representation."

And goes on to conclude: The evidence provided in this representation supports the conclusions drawn by the Authorities as set out in the joint Adequacy of Consultation Representation dated 20 July 2023. 20. It is considered that the Applicant has met the procedural requirements of Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Act with regard to the technical process of consultation and publicity. However, with regard to wider issues of consultation and engagement and regard to guidance and advice on the pre-application process, it is considered that the Applicant has not met the requirements of Sections 49 and 50 of the Act, which raises significant concerns (as outlined in this representation)."

And goes on to say:

"Accordingly, WSCC considers that PINS should decline to accept the DCO application to enable more meaningful engagement and consultation by the Applicant."

Furthermore, in their deadline 8 submission the JLAs stated that they 'consider that EMG is the optimum mechanism to provide appropriate controls, and to ensure that policy compliant growth can occur'.

I entirely agree because, if this DCO is granted, it is imperative that GAL must be monitored carefully to ensure they maintain a measured and regulated approach to expansion.

But in fact I think that the ExA needs to go further with regard to requiring an even more stringent approach to growth from GAL. Not only should there be an EMG plan in place to ensure compliant growth, my view is that any EMG should more stringent than the JLAs have asked for.

The impact of unregulated growth on South East residents will be disastrous in terms of air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, noise pollution and transport chaos, not to mention the negative impact on scarce water resources, water pollution and the environment.

The ideal solution is to not approve this application, especially as now extra air travel capacity has been created for the SE by the green light being given to City Airport's expansion and bearing in mind the Applicant's unhelpful approach to the process. However, should the DCO be approved, there MUST be sufficiently stringent, independent monitoring in place to cap unlimited growth, to measure and limit noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and road gridlock.