

Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR
15 January, 2025

Interested Party Reference number: 20044695

Application by Gatwick Airport Limited Seeking Development Consent for the Proposed Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project (Ref: TR020005)

Comments on the Secretary of State's letter dated 9 December 2024 and responses thereto

We refer to the letter dated 9 December 2024 sent on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport ("SoS") and the response to that letter from the applicant and others.

Without prejudice:

Noise:

Concentrated flight paths using GPS Navigation are already too concentrated, doubling traffic along the same routes would make them unbearable for those living under flight paths.

Economic Benefits:

The economic case is not viable, business traffic has fallen dramatically with the advent of video calling. Staff were laid off during COVID, there was limited interest when they were offered to return on zero hour contracts at a reduced rate. Gatwick's calculation of jobs creation includes unrelated existing employees in the Crawley area that are not connected to the airport or a new Northern Runway. Crawley Council themselves have admitted that the purported job benefits are not realistic. In fact with increased automation the airport is employing less staff all the time.

The Economic benefits of a second runway cannot be calculated in isolation, subsidies, the true cost of supposed 'bio-fuels' and the long term cost of environmental damage need to be taken into consideration when evaluating the value of a project.

Housing underneath flight paths with double the traffic will become worthless as are existing areas affected by flooding in the UK. Building Societies are already refusing new mortgages in the Charlwood area as a result of this DCO application.

Environment:

GAL's figures drastically underestimate the carbon emissions and impact of this project. Factoring only the Terminal emissions not counting the emissions from double the number of flights, ground vehicles, and waste incinerator to the local and global atmosphere. An estimated 5% increase in UK National carbon dioxide emissions alone. Doubling capacity from 45 million to 90 million passengers will have a huge impact on the local, national and global environment.

Roads - There is no funding from GAL for road improvements in Surrey through which the majority of traffic will pass, clogging up towns like Dorking and Reigate. These roads are already potholed and congested.

Rail - There is no GAL funding for rail improvements, Southern Rail is already at capacity with renown for delays.

Night flights - The psychological damage of night flights, early morning flights and a doubling of over flying from continuous flights cannot be underestimated.

The environmental cost of such a project would be extremely damaging both to the immediate ecosystem, local community, national air quality and global CO2 emissions it causes. If the true cost of this DCO application is taken into consideration to include double the take offs, flights, and landings the increase from GAL's Northern Runway DCO alone would push national emissions over and above the Government's own legally binding commitments.

Flooding:

The increase in surface area of tarmac will cause a huge amount of water runoff, further polluting already polluted waterways with oil. The runoff will cause further flooding in the low lying parts of the Weald which sits on clay.

Abinger Common flights:

Without a redesign of air traffic routes in the form of FASIS South Gatwick Route 4 during Easterly Wind operations flights fly too low at 2000 - 3000 ft over villages at 1000 ft in the Surrey Hills until the pass underneath the Heathrow stack at 4000 ft and are vectored off to their destination. Heathrow routes should be redrawn so that Gatwick flights can take off to 4000 ft immediately and be vectored off to their destination thereby spreading flights paths and negating the effects of concentrated PRNAV flight paths on local housing. Concentrating flights paths makes some housing uninhabitable, rather than doubling the traffic on set flight paths which would only exacerbate the problem further the CAA should be working to limit the impact of air traffic on housing by taking off to 4000 ft immediately and varying the concentration of traffic so it does not make some areas 'noise sewers' and others untouched. FASIS South needs to be introduced with this redesign of the flight paths for Routes 3 - 7 at GAL before any plans for expansion can be considered as the existing flight paths are already too low and concentrated to take any further traffic.

Yours faithfully,

Edward Bigland
Abinger Parish Councillor