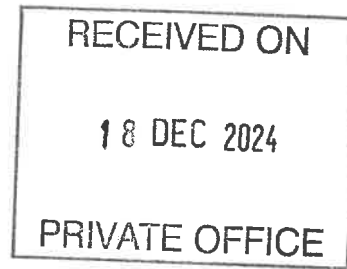


FAO: Heidi Alexander MP
December 2024



13th

Dear Secretary of State

Congratulations on your recent promotion to this important cabinet post; what a difficult job you now have, and I wish you well in fulfilling your duties with fairness, responsibility and wisdom. On which note: you will have now received the recommendations from the Planning Inspectorate on Gatwick's Development Consent Order to extend its operations by making their emergency runway fully operational. I spoke against their proposal at one of the Planning Inspectorate's open hearings earlier this year, along with many other concerned parties.

You will know I am sure just how damaging aviation is to the planet, and, as the fastest growing and most polluting type of transport, a significant contributor to global warming. At the same time passenger numbers are predicted to double within the next fifteen years, while the aviation sector remains almost unregulated and virtually untaxed. What a shame your colleague [REDACTED] does not realise this, as charging fuel duty and VAT on aeroplane kerosene could generate an extra £10bn for the Treasury each year. That's a lot of extra cash for the NHS and other frontline services.

You will also be well aware that the cross-party Climate Change Committee recommended that there should be no further UK airport expansion if the government is to meet its own, legally-binding climate targets. And in this respect, no amount of untested "carbon capture and storage", nor yet so-called "sustainable aviation fuels", are going to be able to square the circle of increased aviation capacity. Moreover, both these pie-in-the-sky proposals are a specious distraction from the damage already being done by the colossal daily number of UK flights.

So please take on board these considerations when you are called upon to make your decision early next year, and face down the lobbying groups rabid to make yet further profits. There can be no infinite growth on a finite planet, particularly one that is already so clearly at breaking point.

Yours respectfully and in hope,

