



Meeting note

Project name	Gatwick Airport Northern Runway
File reference	TR020005
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	16 September 2022
Meeting with	Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL)
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project update meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project update and timeline

The Applicant provided the Inspectorate with an update to the project timeline. In autumn 2021 consultation took place followed by a second targeted consultation in summer 2022. The project description has now been finalised and the Environmental Statement (ES) drafting has now commenced. The Applicant intends to submit the Development Consent Order (DCO) application at the end of Q1 2023 with a Secretary of State (SoS) decision expected Q3 2024.

Draft documents for review by the Inspectorate

The Inspectorate had previously expressed an interest in seeing a number of documents from the Applicant ahead of DCO submission.

The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that all requested documents should be ready to be submitted at the end of January 2023. The Inspectorate suggested a staggered submission of draft documentation and requested the Applicant provides a timetable for when the documents are to be provided. The Applicant confirmed that it intended to submit the draft DCO before the end of January 2023.

The Inspectorate requested that in addition to the draft documents it would be useful for the Applicant to provide a project description alongside the DCO and an interrelationship document which identifies other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) which are ongoing or proposed within the project vicinity.

Consultation 2 update

The Applicant updated the Inspectorate on the outcome of the consultation. The response rate was encouraging with more than 500 responses, of which nine were from statutory authorities and 15 from local authorities. There were some key themes emerging from the feedback including areas covering highways, parking, active travel, and noise. Other themes raised were Biodiversity Net Gain, visibility of the Carbon Action Plan and project alignment with Jet Zero. The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that it was in the middle of finalising the Carbon Action Plan.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if it intended to undertake further targeted consultation. The Applicant stated it was unable to confirm at this stage.

Scoping Opinion query

The Applicant discussed queries which arose from the Scoping Opinion in terms of property price impacts. The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that it was unclear on how to assess the socio-economic effects from diminution in property value and questioned how this had been addressed through scoping for other similar projects. The Inspectorate advised it would review other similar projects and respond to the Applicant via email.

Engagement update

i. Statutory stakeholder engagement

The Applicant provided an update on how engagement had progressed over the last six to twelve months.

The Applicant confirmed the engagement with National Highways has been good. The Applicant has a s278 agreement in place and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been drafted between the Applicant and National Highways. A detailed engagement programme has been agreed through Technical Working Groups. The Applicant advised that it was just starting the DCO drafting on sections relating to highways. The Applicant also advised that it had agreed a draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) process with National Highways and had sent it a first version which will continue to evolve up to submission and beyond.

The Applicant has maintained regular dialogue with the Environment Agency with the focus on flood modelling.

The Applicant updated the Inspectorate on its engagement with Natural England. The Applicant has been trying to agree several issues with them in relation to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and the potential use of National Highways' Ammonia tool.

ii. Local Planning Authorities (LPA) stakeholder engagement

The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that Topic Working Group meetings commenced in 2019 at the project outset. Six sets of meetings have been held covering DCO familiarisation, project scoping, pre-consultation briefing on the 2020 Preliminary Environmental Information

Report (PEIR), pre-consultation briefing on the 2021 PEIR, mid-consultation queries in 2021, and consultation feedback focused on agreeing ES methodology. The Applicant confirmed another set of meetings are planned to discuss feedback and alignment on impacts and mitigation. The Applicant confirmed that engagement included mixed views, but overall engagement had been good.

The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that 600 comments were submitted between May and August 2022 by the LPAs in response to GAL material on ES methodology. The comments were discussed in detail and then collated into a draft SoCG spreadsheet. The SoCG documents were then issued.

The Applicant updated the Inspectorate on the Topic Working Group Autumn/ Winter 22/ 23 programme. The new programme covers agreement of impacts and appropriate mitigation and the agendas have already been shared. The Applicant also intends to have further conversations with the LPAs on the noise envelope concept in this period.

The Applicant also updated the Inspectorate on discussions on a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the LPAs.

iii. Noise envelope further engagement

The Applicant updated the Inspectorate on the noise envelope further engagement process through the establishment of a Noise Envelope Group. This started in May 2022 and will finish in Oct 2022 with the aim of assisting the further development of a noise envelope proposal for inclusion in the DCO. The process is now focused on drawing up an agreed output document for issue to GAL.

Land interests summary

The Applicant updated the Inspectorate on land acquisition. There are c. 34 freehold areas with the largest areas being owned by Surrey County Council, West Sussex County Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, National Highways and Network Rail. The Applicant confirmed it had a prioritised engagement strategy in place for all landowners and had experienced no issues with seeking access for surveys. The Applicant advised a first option agreement has already been signed for one piece of land. The Applicant also noted there is one piece of Crown land to be considered.

Statements of Commonality (SoC)

The Applicant advised the Inspectorate that it intended to prepare two Statements of Commonality: one for the LPAs and one for highway authorities on highway-specific matters. The Applicant envisages creating these immediately after the DCO submission.

The Inspectorate agreed the approach and confirmed that the timing sounded sensible.

Summary of actions/ follow-up

The following actions were agreed:

- Socio-economic assessment – the Inspectorate will review similar projects in relation to assessment of diminution in property prices and respond to the Applicant via email.
- The Applicant confirmed that it intended to submit its application at the end of March/ beginning of April 2023.
- The Inspectorate made the Applicant aware of the judicial review of the Bristol Airport expansion decision starting soon. The Inspectorate will keep the Applicant updated on any important issues arising which may affect the Applicant's application.
- A further three meetings between the Applicant and the Inspectorate have been agreed in November, January, and February ahead of the DCO submission. The Applicant will confirm to the Inspectorate dates for the meetings as soon as possible.

