

# Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Proposal – Implications for the District

## Planning Policy Committee Thursday, 24 June 2021

Report of: Chief Planning Officer  
Executive Head of Communities

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Purpose: To update the Committee on Gatwick Airport's progress towards a Development Consent Order ('DCO') allowing them to utilise the standby runway (northern runway) into a second runway.

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Publication status: Unrestricted

Purpose: For information

Wards affected: All

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### Executive summary:

Gatwick Airport Limited ('GAL') has started the process of preparing an application for a Development Consent Order ('DCO'), a type of planning consent that is granted by the Secretary of State, to be able to use the existing emergency runway for departures.

This report is to update Committee Members on the progress to date with the DCO process and the upcoming public consultation that GAL are due to commence late Summer 2021.

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**This report supports the Council's priority of:** Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we need; Supporting economic recovery in Tandridge; Becoming a greener, more sustainable District

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## **Recommendation to Committee:**

That this Council writes to Gatwick Airport to make the following points:

1. The Council acknowledges Gatwick Airport Limited's (GAL) decision to continue with the DCO to redevelop the northern runway as a second runway to increase capacity. The Council expects that GAL will fulfil its obligation to consult with all those who live or work in the District, including those hard to reach groups such as those without access to the internet. The consultation needs to provide alternative opportunities for consultation responses to be made offline. The Council requests GAL to inform the Council of its proposals for achieving this.
2. The Council is also aware that the Future Airspace Implementation South ('FASI-S') is currently being progressed by the Civil Aviation Authority to increase capacity over the southern part of the UK. With the proposed increased traffic movements from the additional capacity at Gatwick, the Council requests that GAL explains the full impact of the changes on all parts of the District and in particular on those areas where traffic could be routed that have never been overflown before, including the north of the District which has both significant residential populations and the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
3. The Council has adopted a Climate Change Strategy and endorses national proposals to reduce the use of fossil fuels and is therefore disappointed that GAL are seeking to increase the use of these fuels which does not seem to be compatible with the 2050 climate-neutral objectives. Whilst the Council is not against the use of planes for business and leisure and recognises the economic and social advantages, it is concerned about the environmental impacts, short and long term, that significant growth at Gatwick will have on the District.

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## **Reason for recommendation:**

The Council is involved in work to inform the DCO and public consultation will take place late Summer 2021. Clarification is needed from Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) on the consultation process to enable hard to reach groups so that they can submit consultation responses offline.

The impact of the proposals to bring the existing standby runway (northern runway) into routine use alongside the main runway are significant. Further clarification is needed from GAL on the traffic and environmental implications that significant growth at Gatwick will have on the District.

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## **Introduction and background**

- 1.1 In July 2019, Gatwick published their latest masterplan. The masterplan outlined three scenarios for future growth:
  - Scenario 1: Where Gatwick remains a single runway operation with intensified use of the existing main runway
  - Scenario 2: Where the existing standby runway is used routinely together with the main runway
  - Scenario 3: Where land is continued to be safeguarded for an additional runway to the south of the airport
- 1.2 Intensification of the main runway (Scenario 1) began following the submission and approval of Permitted Development (August 2019) to create a Rapid Exit Taxiway from the main runway. This will facilitate up to 11 additional aircraft movements per hour.
- 1.3 Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) announced their intention to actively pursue Scenario 2, bringing the existing standby runway (northern runway) into routine use alongside the main runway.
- 1.4 To progress with the proposal, Gatwick Airport will need to apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO) in order to obtain planning permission. Work is currently ongoing to prepare a DCO application to bring the standby runway into routine use. This is a rigorous statutory planning process which is overseen by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.5 As part of this process, in September 2019 GAL submitted a Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate, requesting a Scoping Opinion on the extent of the potential environmental impacts to be considered as part of the DCO process. The Council's response to the consultation by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on this Scoping Report was submitted in October 2019. The Planning Inspectorate preceded to adopt their Scoping Opinion in October 2019.
- 1.6 The Council is currently involved in works to inform the DCO application and public consultation will follow.

## **Consultation**

- 2.1 The first stages in the DCO process will see Gatwick carry out surveys and prepare detailed environmental information on its northern runway plans. This information, together with further details of the plans, will then be subject to a period of public consultation (scheduled for late summer 2021).

- 2.2 Once consultation has been completed, further updates to the plans will be made to reflect the outcome of consultation, before a final DCO submission is made to the Planning Inspectorate (expected early 2022). Gatwick's proposals will then be examined with interested parties able to make further representations. Following the examination, the Planning Inspectorate then has three months to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for Transport who will then publish a decision.

### **Other options considered**

No other options relevant.

## **Key implications**

### **Comments of the Chief Finance Officer**

There are no obvious financial implications associated with this report. However, any decisions that are made either now or in the future must consider if they will require any resourcing and how that will be funded. Any costs must be kept within the Council's existing budgets.

### **Comments of the Head of Legal Services**

There are no identifiable legal implications in making the response as set out in this report. The consultation currently being held by GAL is a valuable opportunity for stakeholders to express their views on the proposed options for expanding aviation capacity close to the District. Therefore, any community group including those that do not have access to the internet should have the opportunity to submit any issues with the proposals, to inform them of local knowledge they may have omitted, and to submit potential mitigations.

### **Equality**

An Equality Impact Report is not required for this decision as it is a response to a consultation by an external organisation.

### **Climate change**

The Council declared a motion to take steps to address the climate emergency in 2020 and is supporting this with a climate change action plan. Reducing carbon via energy consumption and emissions are key priorities, as are other factors that fall within the remit of climate change, such as air quality, health and the environment.

From a climate change perspective, publications that the Council use as a reference for policy are the recommendations from the Climate Change Committee and HM Government's response. The latest policy proposals from the Climate Change Committee regarding aviation and the Sixth Carbon Budget,<sup>1</sup> underline the national importance of reducing aviation's impact on the global climate. Included in the proposals is the statement that "[t]here should be no net expansion of UK airport capacity unless the sector is on track to sufficiently outperform its net emissions trajectory and can accommodate the additional demand".<sup>2</sup>

In the government's response to the proposals they state: "Airport expansion is a core part of boosting our global connectivity and levelling up across the UK. The Government takes seriously its commitments on the environment and the expansion of any airport must always be within the UK's environmental obligations."<sup>3</sup>

Further, in a recent Parliament decarbonisation briefing paper on aviation, Parliament state that the government are "in the process of revising transport policy across all modes in order to meet the challenge of the 2050 net-zero emissions target. The Government intends to publish a transport decarbonisation plan and an aviation strategy (including a net-zero aviation strategy). It is also planning to publish an Aviation Recovery Plan to 'boost' air travel after the pandemic."<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, the Council will closely monitor GAL's proposals and the progress with the DCO, and how they seek to complement national policy. In addition, the Council are interested in any information on the air-quality and ground transport implications of the proposals, given the proximity of the airport to the District and potential influence they may have on the strategic road network that pass through Tandridge.

**Appendices – None**

**Background papers- None**

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<sup>1</sup> Climate Change Committee (2020) *Sixth Carbon Budget*. Online available:

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/sixth-carbon-budget/> [Last accessed 16/06/2021].

<sup>2</sup> Climate Change Committee (2020) *Policies for the Sixth Carbon Budget and Net Zero*, p. 162. Online available (to download): <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/sixth-carbon-budget/> [Last accessed 16/06/2021].

<sup>3</sup> HM Government (2020) *The Government Response to the Committee on Climate Change's 2020 Progress Report to Parliament*, p. 106. Online available:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/928005/government-response-to-ccc-progress-report-2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/928005/government-response-to-ccc-progress-report-2020.pdf) [Last accessed 16/06/2021].

<sup>4</sup> UK Parliament (2021) Aviation, decarbonisation and climate change, np. Online available: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8826/> [Last accessed 16/06/2021].