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Email Subject: Gatwick 2nd runway

Email Body:

Dear Commissioner,

Growth is the leading edge of political thinking nowadays. No wonder politicians thrive on that "growth" in a time of crisis.

Gatwick though is in the wrong location for massive growth. Airport expansion should be north of London for road, rail public transport and air traffic control reasons reasons.

A two runway Gatwick is forecast to handle 96 million passengers a year, making it bigger than Heathrow at present. You may believe that economically a second runway would be beneficial to the Counties around Gatwick and not have any adverse effects on Constituencies away from the Gatwick area. With the proposals for Gatwick to be expanded, with many millions more passengers travelling to it, through it and away from it, and many more workers, homes and roads, there is no doubt that expansion will adversely affect the whole of the South East.

The present terminals are on the 'wrong', north side of the existing runway, while the new runway would be to the south of the present runway. It is therefore proposed that the runways would operate in 'independent mixed mode', with each runway handling both arriving and departing aircraft. Aircraft using the new southern runway would use a new terminal between the runways, and would mainly use flight paths to and from the south. Aircraft using the existing runway would use the two existing terminals and would mainly follow flight paths to and from the north of that runway. This will not suit the low cost airlines operations. Consider a flight coming in from say Spain/France/Italy and going to the new southern terminal. This aircraft is then scheduled to operate a flight to Scandinavia /Northern Ireland/Scotland. Operational efficiency will be reduced and fuel burn (= pollution) costs increased as the aircraft moves from one side of the airport to the other, a slow, safety critical process. EasyJet (Gatwick's present largest user) has already said it would consider pulling out of Gatwick if the second runway plan goes ahead.

With both runways handling arrivals and departures, there could be no scheme to provide respite by alternating the use of the runways, as at Heathrow.

The proposed runway separation of 1,045m is only just greater than the minimum of 1,035m allowed for mixed mode operations by international safety regulations. Thus there would be frequent occasions when two aircraft approaching Gatwick would be side-by-side and only one kilometer apart for the final twelve to fifteen miles. This separation requires accurate navigation and might not be practicable in strong winds. This will reduce the resilience of Gatwick to bad weather delays.

The chances are therefore much greater for 'missed approaches' to be performed by aircraft that for one reason or another are unable to land. These 'missed approach procedures' have many times in recent years ended in disaster (six large passenger aircraft have crashed with the loss of all on board in the last 20 years). The Go-around Safety Forum held by the Flight Safety Foundation, Eurocontrol and the European Regional Airlines Association in Brussels last year heard that one in ten go-around reports recorded a potential hazardous go-around outcome. Go-around's occur between one and three times every 1,000 flights. As the go-around procedure at Gatwick is to turn over Crawley while climbing, the potential for a major disaster is being increased over two fold.

Despite what expansion proponents might say, the business community is not unanimously in favour of building new runways. Engagement with stakeholders in the international business community revealed that many businesses get tired of being the excuse for ploughing ahead with ill-thought out big ticket government investments.

The large, major international airlines have for years done their very best to get their operations away from Gatwick and relocate them, at considerable cost to themselves, to Heathrow. So where is the increase in air traffic going to come from that necessitates two runways at Gatwick and for how long before the oil runs out?

The economic benefits of a new Gatwick runway as calculated by your Commission are half those for Heathrow. The Commission recognises that Gatwick brings in far less than Heathrow due to cheap flights being 'King'.

Business air travel is on the decline due to technology.

There will be no economic boost to the local community, as mass infrastructure expenditure will mean more money going out than in. It is estimated that the cost of Gatwick will start at an extra £100 per household and there are no guarantees that business rates will continue to go to local authorities.

Increases in charges per passenger to pay for expansion would be unpopular with the public and would lessen the commercial viability of Gatwick in relation to other airports. Higher airport charges would make raising finance difficult. If aviation was then to be subject to fuel tax and VAT, even allowing for air passenger duty, the business cases for both Gatwick would collapse.

The Business case for a second runway at Gatwick has already been rejected by British Airways.

There is very little unemployment throughout the region with 6,723 vacancies currently within a 10 mile radius of Gatwick.

There is currently only 1-3% unemployment in the area, but 286 business premises would be

demolished if the second runway went ahead. Where will these businesses go? There is no where locally!

Many firms would suffer from a shortage of labour, while traffic congestion would have an adverse impact on local and rural businesses.

There will be little opportunity for high skill apprenticeships and youth employment (other than seasonal low paid employment) due to the nature of the airlines business plans. Only minor aircraft servicing is undertaken at Gatwick, while all the in depth maintenance is done abroad.

There would have to be a mass inward migration of workers to fulfill the Airport Commission anticipated 32,500 extra jobs. Your Commission states, 'low skilled workers' will live across 14 counties; how are they to travel, or afford to travel to Gatwick each day?

What will Gatwick (tucked away in the SE) expansion do for the UK north-south divide? The employment benefits of any airport expansion should be for the country as a whole and not just the SE?

With the potential numbers of airport travellers increasing from 35 million to 96 million plus, there is no way the roads and rail lines will be able to cope.

A second runway would mean around 136,000 extra road journeys a day in the vicinity of Gatwick with roads becoming grid locked. That is just for air passengers, travel to work by airport employees and journeys to work by employees of other firms. In addition, there would be all the extra commercial traffic generated by the larger airport. The result will mean delays, longer journey times both for staff and for deliveries which would have an adverse effect on local firms. This extra traffic will impact everyone in the County to some extent, including the coastal areas where people and Councils may believe a second runway will not affect them. How will the major and feeder roads, that are already congested, deal with these huge increases?

An airport of the size proposed with only restricted access via the already overcrowded M23.

Gatwick is in the wrong place, tucked away down in the SE corner as it is. There is already (often) restricted access from the M25 onto the M23 due to traffic congestion - then travellers can't get off the M23 to Gatwick - more traffic congestion.

The already at capacity Brighton/London railway line has to be considered as totally unviable. The SE rail network is already adjudged the worst in the Country!

The proposed road & rail improvements will only accommodate the expected growth of the immediate future and not the extra 61 million passengers and thousands of incoming migrant workers and their families.

What about parents trying to get kids to school while the local roads to access Gatwick are clogged?

Where are the new airport car parks going to be located and what will be the access plan for them?

New and improved roads that would be needed to provide the level of access required into an expanded Gatwick, potentially becoming as big as any airport in the world, and may include: -

M23 and M25 widening

Crawley Northern By pass A264 Faygate to A23 Hookwood

East Grinstead Western By Pass

Pease Pottage to East Grinstead Western By Pass

Gatwick Eastern Approach A22 to M23 Jct 9

Junction 9 flyover for south bound slip

Gatwick southwest approach A24/A29

Gatwick western approach A264/A25 and the small country roads

The A27 coastal road

A23 re-alignment

Re-provision of Balcombe Road

Improvements to Longbridge roundabout

Airport Way widening

New terminal accesses

Cost for a dual carriageway/motorway road is approximately £30 million per mile. Potentially about 50 miles of such roads will be required - cost £1½ billion!

GAL are not interested in what happens outside the airport boundary, and only offer up a meagre

token to attempt to be seen as responsible neighbours, that they are not! They only want to make money at public and environmental expense. GAL has not paid any corporation tax for 3 years.

Only a derisory £10 million has been offered by GAL for road junction improvements. What about the road infrastructure (above)?

£10 million will only pay for a set of traffic lights and a lot of white and yellow lines.

GAL states Gatwick will be sold in 2019. So will a new runway ever be built, or is this all to make Gatwick a better proposition to new foreign owners? Sell with planning permission - that will put the Airport price up!

The cost to the SE will be massive and far greater than the Counties and neighbourhoods will be able to realistically support financially and politically for long into the future. Who then will fund infrastructure, roads, policing, hospitals, schools, religious buildings improvements?

About 40,000 new houses would be needed, equivalent to a new town the size of Crawley, a severe strain on local hospitals, schools etc. Where are all the schools, doctors, hospitals, social services to come from for the inwardly migrating workers that Gatwick will demand?

The number of new houses required around the immediate Counties, just from the second runway, will greatly exceed the numbers previously planned (the SE plan that was rejected) over and above the massive expected influx of people from natural growth. The expansion will turn Horsham, Crawley, East Grinstead and surrounding areas into a 'Hounslow', with all the social problems associated with overcrowding.

There will be the loss of 168 residential properties, with an additional 37 properties potentially being lost as a result of the construction of new roads.

There are twenty listed buildings within the land take area for a second runway which are at risk from whole or partial removal. There are also a number of graves located within the grounds of St Michaels that will need to be relocated.

Medical services in the area are already overstretched and failing to meet their commitments and targets, so how will they cope with such a huge increase in population? The Government can't afford a new hospital now for the Horsham/Crawley area, so what makes residents think that funding will suddenly be found? At least one new hospital will be required. If there is ever a major disaster at Gatwick, with larger aircraft operating, where will the casualties be taken?

GAL is quoted as saying it will pay for a new hospital; that £46.5 million fund is to be spread across the whole SE for improvements, not just locally. How much does a hospital cost to build? Where will it go?

If Gatwick is chosen, then the massive building and infrastructure costs will have to be borne by all Constituencies across the SE, something many Councillors will not currently realise and probably not be willing to bear.

The new airport boundary would be only 100 meters from the residential areas of Crawley and far too close to the centre of Crawley town - less than 2 miles.

The new runway threshold will be only 500 meters from homes - some of which are being built now, in 2015!

The SE Councils will need to mitigate the environmental devastation (air and noise pollution/grid locked roads/loss of green belt etc) and also build the required infrastructure (roads/homes/schools/health care) to accommodate both the airport and the many thousands of migrant workers/families from the north of the UK and the EU that will be needed to be employed by and around the airport.

Will the SE Councils really be able to handle this level of increase?

Will the SE Councils really want to inflict this environmental destruction on our beautiful countryside?

Will the SE Councils really want to concrete over much of the green lands and villages that surround Gatwick to provide affordable housing for inward migration workers?

With the increased terrorist threat, how much will the policing bill be for an expanded Gatwick and who will pay for it?

Where will the water supply come from required for Gatwick and mass housing?

Where will all the waste go from the mass housing and Gatwick's 96m passengers?

Do not be taken in by GALs minimal promises of compensation and aid, the cost to the Counties and the Government will be far, far greater than forecast. Will local Councils and tax payers ever be able to afford this?

Even for Gatwick to reach its 45 million capacity with a single runway there will still be major issues and costs that local neighbourhoods and Councils will have to bear, along with many environmental issues. This is obviously something that will need to be addressed in the future.

New Flight paths added to the 'old' flight paths will destroy the tranquillity over areas that have not been flown over before in West Sussex and surrounding Counties. Three times as many people as at present would be significantly affected by aircraft noise. The increase in the number of flights per year goes from 250,000 to 560,000. These flight paths and increased air traffic will cause

intense disturbance, distress and anger.

Serious health issues arise from constant aircraft noise and emissions. It is shown that aircraft noise can cause misery, for adults and children, as well as disrupt children's learning. Sleep deprivations from night flights, (Gatwick charge no landing fees at night) is a particular concern, which affects well being and the working day.

What about longer opening hours for flights in and out of Gatwick? The Head of the Association of European Airlines (AEA) said at a recent conference that, "he understands the social concerns, but the AEA believes that for Europe's Airports to stand a chance of competing with global airports, 24 hour operations are a must if Europe's airports want to maintain their position in the world." Ever more flights, but now H24!

Doctors are able to effectively treat diseases like high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. Patients can stop smoking. Noise is about the only risk factor to the health that can only be influenced by you, the politicians.

Environmental damage is not just about the space the runway will occupy, it is about the knock on effect to the rural areas we enjoy at present. It is about changing Sussex and the surrounding Counties forever. 75.5 Ha of woodland will be lost locally, including 14 Ha of ancient woodland. A new runway would increase climate change damage from aircraft emissions - aviation is the fastest growing cause of climate change.

Gatwick was flooded last year and there was serious disruption as a result. The problem of local flooding would be increased by the growing infrastructure the poor handling of river and flood prevention by the EA.

There is a hugely increased pollution risk from the run-off of the de-icing and anti-icing chemicals used by the airlines and the airport to treat aircraft, runways and taxiways.

Do not allow GAL to turn the Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex corner into an urbanised, polluted, noisy and congested industrial environment that most long term residents will want to escape from as is the case all around Heathrow.

Please consider the environmental devastation that will befall our beautiful Counties if you and the Government approve the Gatwick option in the coming months.

Do not be blinded by what will no doubt be eventually proved as a false economic benefit. The second runway will not mitigate the financial, safety, security and environmental cost to the SE Counties residents.

West Sussex, Kent and Surrey County Councils have voted to oppose a second runway.

Mole Valley, Horsham and now Crawley have voted to oppose a second runway.

I ask you to carefully consider the safety implications, the devastation and the cost to the whole SE should a second runway ever be built at Gatwick.

If you do this, then I am sure you can only oppose a second runway at Gatwick.

