

[REDACTED]

Email Subject: Second runway at Gatwick

Email Body:

Dear Sirs

I enclose my response to your consultation as follows;

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1st February 2015

Dear Sirs,

I write in response to the invitation for the views of the public on the proposal for a second runway for Gatwick.

We have lived here, quite close to the A24 where it is elevated on embankment, directly under the centre of the flight path for existing westerly take-offs for planes needing to turn North or East and not far from the railway line which is in quite a deep cutting and almost inaudible to us. Background noise levels are therefore relatively high compared to our neighbours living in greater tranquillity. Plane noise has become less of an issue for us as improvements in aircraft design have rendered them significantly quieter. Nevertheless there are occasions in the garden when we cannot converse except with raised voices if at all, for periods of 10-15 seconds when a plane is turning overhead. For many of our neighbours the increased air traffic during the recent corridor re-routing trial caused unacceptable levels of disruption. Our views expressed below are coloured by the relatively high background noise levels in our immediate vicinity, but this intrusion will be more extreme for many others. The type of noise is a psychological factor also since while the sea may be noisy, most people would like that. Equally, while a passing steam engine or small propeller aircraft might arouse nostalgic pleasure and would be a comparative rarity, the frequent passage of aircraft overhead with a different acoustic spectrum of noise and volume is not going to be pleasurable to the great majority of residents. While take off, reverse thrust and taxiing noise is

intrusive for us occasionally, even 10 miles from LGW, clearly more can and should be done with bunding, acoustic panelling, etc to reduce the impact on those living much closer to the airport in its present mode. The prospect of a second runway is going to be very damaging for all those who live within a 10-15mile radius of Gatwick, especially those near the additional flight paths in what is currently predominantly a very pleasant rural environment.

We believe that a second runway at Gatwick is going to have a very large negative impact on the environment within a very large radius of predominantly rural Britain. This will be partly from the operations of the airport itself, exacerbated by the current lack of appropriate infrastructure; roads, rail, housing, schools, health and other facilities. There is already a shortage of housing in the SE of England and relatively high employment while the transfer arrangements to Heathrow, undeniably the current main hub airport, rely on the M25 which is already close to capacity at peak times and will reach full capacity long before any second runway becomes operational. Only a designated and direct rail link might resolve this at very considerable cost which should be borne entirely by LGW/LHR. Much of the environs of Gatwick is designated Green Belt and much of the countryside around is already appearing "stressed". Listed ancient buildings and ancient woodland, both irreplaceable, would be destroyed. More detailed responses to some of the consultation points are given below but I believe the better option is to move more airport facilities away from the SE of England to where employment and infrastructure are required and to introduce policies to reduce the demand for air travel, a hugely environmentally damaging process. (We rarely fly away on business or on holiday so this is not being especially hypocritical). There are also under-used airports north of London, though these, too, are in relatively rural settings.

Currently LGW is stated to have a throughput of 34.2 mppa. According to LGW figures the stated 42mppa current maximum capacity is already a 25% increase over the current situation. I.e. there

could be an increase in the present number of planes taking off from 332 to 415 take offs/day prior to the need for any additional runway capacity.

The current set-up has notional maximum of 55 aircraft movements/hour. Simplistically perhaps, 55 movements/ hour for 18 hours is equivalent to 990 movements in an 18 hour day (6am-24pm). This is a potential ~50% increase in capacity available with the current configuration. Therefore there is no justification for any planned increase until capacity requirements are realistically projected to reach 68mppa in ten years' time from that point based on runway capacity.

This crude calculation ignores the modern advances in aircraft design with greater individual capacities and greater performance abilities.

I therefore think that a second runway at Gatwick is unacceptable and presently unnecessary.

Some points raised in relation to the three runway options consultation LGW issued in Summer 2014 are relevant to the present proposal. These included;

The runway separation of 1035m is only just greater than the absolute minimum and may render operations of both vulnerable to severe weather and other factors.

Were a second runway to be constructed, against all these valid arguments, then most of the cost of the essential infrastructure required (schools, doctors' surgeries, hospitals, social services) should be borne by the airport owners and that should be an explicit signed legal obligation placed on LGW prior to any government decision-making process so it is properly factored into any financial case.

Local communities would be put under stress by in-migration of workers from elsewhere in the UK or from the EU, all of whom would require housing and access to the necessary infrastructure.

The significant amount of E-W road traffic on rural roads through Charlwood and neighbouring villages will be increased by the related increase in the workforce living in district, not all of whom will want to live in Crawley or Horley or Horsham with its new town-sized estates. Local road closures will not help the local communities at all. As an example the current very circuitous access from NE corner of airport (eg Hookwood) to the existing N Terminal is very environmentally unfriendly.

Some improved rail links are already under construction or have been budgeted regardless of whether a second runway is permitted at LGW. These improvements are very substantially to N & S; only the Redhill connections and the more distant S Coast ones provide any E-W connections. Let these improvements proceed and then review their success before attempting to justify an additional runway.

Noise in rural areas is more annoying because of low ambient background noise and the greater differential to peak overflight noise levels. Any further expansion of Gatwick affects a much wider

area than at Heathrow in this regard. Therefore simple comparison of population numbers affected at Heathrow and Gatwick are invalid. As an example please refer to the great distress and anger caused by the recent trial of new flight paths.

It will be essential for any further consideration of air traffic route planning not be undertaken in isolation without full consideration of the other routes and stacking also used or planned in the foreseeable future in SE England when assessing the impact of any future changes, including the introduction of a second runway at Gatwick.

It is also a surprising omission that LGW do not appear to have undertaken wide ranging and properly representative noise monitoring of the entire district. This should form an essential part of any Environmental Impact Assessment before any serious proposal can be even considered.

Noise and light pollution in the neighbouring areas associated with any second runway can be significantly reduced by the use of reinforced earth and better energy absorbency for noise. There may be energy recovery options within this and the use of lighting directed only where and when it is required and not reflected and scattered into the sky, which makes LGW visible for 20 miles at night should be factored in to reduce environmental impact. Much of the proposed hardstanding areas could be used for groundsource heat pump arrays and any new structures clad with photovoltaic systems to recover energy. This may have a small affect on the local microclimate, but greatly reduce the energy demand from the airport as a whole.

It is my understanding that the business case for Gatwick has been rejected by EasyJet and British Airways and that EasyJet have recently expressed a preference for Heathrow. However, the business cases for both Heathrow and Gatwick might collapse if aviation were to be subject to

fuel tax and VAT, even allowing for an (unpopular) increase in air passenger duty.

Amongst the more parochial environmental impacts is the issue of topography and flooding. The surrounding topography is gentle, the River Mole is a slow and low gradient stream, the runoff from substantially increased areas of hardstanding will be increasingly “flashy” and flood detention ponds will occupy very large areas because of their shallow live storage capacity unless major pumping stations and anti-pollution measures are adopted.

In summary, I do not accept that the published LGW documents provide suitable justification for a second runway. I also do not believe that LGW’s preference for the largest plausible airport can be justified when viable engineering solutions exist to reduce the footprints of much of the ancillary infrastructure. I would be very happy to discuss and amplify these ideas if it would be of genuine help.

Yours faithfully,

Category	Value (approximate percentage)
1	95
2	100
3	88
4	100
5	98
6	92
7	95
8	88
9	98
10	95
11	100
12	98
13	100
14	55
15	75