

Ifield Village Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Application by Gatwick Airport Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project

Interested Party Reference number: 20045061

To:
Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit
Department of Transport
great Minster House
London SW12P 4DR

Sent by email to: gatwickairport@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

9th June 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

We continue to oppose the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project because of the impact on the local environment and because we are not convinced of the need.

Noise

Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) has claimed that the imposition of 125 km² noise envelope, suggested by the Examining Authority is unreasonable and is based on false assumptions. Given the proximity to large population centres (Horley and Crawley) this limitation does not seem to us to be unreasonable.

The measures to be taken to reduce noise nuisance only reduce noise **within** buildings, via a compensation scheme to pay in full or part for sound insulation of houses. Hence, providing people stay indoors, shut windows and install sound insulation, the assumption is that they will not be too troubled by the noise. There is no acknowledgement, however, of people being outdoors or of the need to open windows. Given that Crawley was built as a New Town in the countryside, enlarging the airport right next door is counter to the concept of the New Town movement and makes the countryside that is left too noisy to render the benefits of being in nature are deemed to provide.

We note that, as yet, there is no restriction on night flying proposed within either the DCO or the rDCO, while at Heathrow such a restriction exists.

Surface transport

Surface transport to the airport is constrained by the geography of the area and the limits of the existing infrastructure. Train capacity from the capital cannot be expanded because of the restrictions on extra lines through the highly built-up areas

of Croydon and south London. Trains from the south, west and east are all limited in frequency by the bottle neck that occurs once they go north to the capital. In addition, there are still many rural areas where residents would only use a car to access Gatwick increasing the congestion on roads and the proliferation of local greenfield sites being used for airport parking, both authorised and unauthorised. Once again, the countryside round Crawley is under threat.

It is necessary not to see the transport problem in isolation but to take into account the additional house building that this area is expected to accommodate. The Government's continued use of the Standard Method to calculate so-called 'housing need' is putting unsustainable traffic demands on existing infra-structure.

For us, we are seeing this slow but unco-ordinated development in the area, producing adverse effects on Ifield Village Conservation Area. Small roads through the conservation area, as with other small roads nearby in residential areas, become the rat runs for people trying to avoid traffic jams on the main roads.

Without much greater investment in public transport networks, the lived experience of local people becomes severely compromised.

Climate Change

We question why the government is considering yet further expansion of air travel while it is trying to reduce carbon emissions.

Hence, we question the need for encouraging more air travel at this time. The benefits, if there are any, will come to GAL as financial benefits. The detrimental impact on air quality will be experienced by local people and on climate change will be felt more widely.

Given the wide use of remote working, we question whether the case for a need for increase in business flying is based on evidence.

Water Management

The SE of England is a water stressed area, so the added demand of an additional 34 million people per year is enormous. If they do no more than use a lavatory once while at the airport, they will flush away approximately an additional 400,000 litres of potable water each day (this is with the most efficient flush systems of using 4 litres per flush). Has this supply been adequately factored in?

What is of equal, or even greater, concern is the treatment of sewage from the 400,000 litres per day flushed down toilets. The two nearest sewage treatment works (STW) at Horley and Gatwick are flagged 'red' i.e. in need of improvement. Our understanding is that Thames Water plans to continue to operate these STWs for many years to come without suitable expansion. The River Mole, which eventually discharges into the River Thames, is the receiving river. For information about the questionable state of the River Mole, including the number of overflow discharges of raw sewage, see River Mole River Watch data at:

<https://www.rivermoleriverwatch.org.uk>

While GAL accepts that it might have to install a STW on its own land, the effluent will eventually land in the River Mole. However good its STW, many chemicals cannot be extracted in the process and land up in the river.

Summary

Because of its impact on the environment and on the large population which lives in the area, we would urge the Secretary of State not to permit this DCO. The mitigations suggested will not compensate for the damage that will be caused.

Yours faithfully



Secretary
Ifield Village Conservation Area Advisory Committee



The conservation area is located in the NW of Crawley, West Sussex.

<https://crawley.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/ifield-village>

