

Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign **GACC**

Campaign Office
Stan Hill
Charlwood
Surrey RH6 OEP

Phone & fax
01293 863 369
www.gacc.org.uk
gacc@btconnect.com

30 October 2006

Press release

CRAZY RUNWAY !

GACC has now had an opportunity to study the new Interim Master Plan produced by BAA Gatwick. It contains plans for a new runway between the airport and Crawley, to open in 2023 or early 2024.¹

‘These plans are crazy and irresponsible,’ said GACC Chairman, Brendon Sewill. ‘We will be asking BAA to withdraw them.’

Crazy and irresponsible because the new runway is designed to more than double the number of flights when the Government, and today the Stern Report, say we must take action on climate change. GACC has calculated that, with the new runway, aircraft from Gatwick would emit the equivalent of about 34 million tonnes of CO₂ a year, nearly fifty times the current level of emissions from Crawley.²

Crazy and irresponsible because a new runway would more than double Gatwick’s level of CO₂ emissions when the target set by the scientists and by the government is for every other industry to halve their emissions.³ Even Environment Secretary, David Miliband, has secretly told Gordon Brown that action must be taken to slow down the growth in air travel: ‘Emissions from aviation are our fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, ... Aviation fuel is untaxed, and air travel lightly taxed ...’⁴

Crazy because the new airport boundary is shown as only 100 metres from the residential areas of Crawley, and the new runway only 400 m away from these houses.

Crazy because BAA admit that, even with quieter aircraft, the new runway would mean 13,200 people affected by serious noise in 2030, compared to 4,600 in 2004.

Crazy because the plans include building a new terminal to handle 30-40 million passengers a year, more than the new T5 at Heathrow, and – according to BAA - possibly demolishing the existing South Terminal.⁵

Crazy because it is squeezed into such a small space that the gate rooms might have to be a mile or two miles from the terminal.⁶ According to British Airways: ‘the space between the runways is inadequate for the traffic assumed.’⁷

Crazy because in 2003, according to BAA, there was a hill at one end of the new runway and the main railway line at the other end, which were “likely to limit the take-off distance”.⁸ But now, according to BAA, the hill has disappeared!⁹

Crazy because, according the government policy,¹⁰ a new Gatwick runway would only be built after a new runway at Stansted, and if pollution levels at Heathrow with a third runway were above EU limits. Yet it now looks increasingly likely, as a result of concern about climate change, that no new runways, at Stansted or anywhere else, will ever be built. Crazy that Gatwick should get the pollution if it is too bad for Heathrow.

Crazy because airport expansion is not what the public want. According to MORI, when people are confronted with the facts about climate change, 57% support slowing down the growth in air travel and only 22% oppose it.¹¹

Notes

¹ Gatwick Airport Interim Master Plan October 2006. Dates: see paragraph 9.39

² See Gatwick – climate change culprit. www.gacc.org.uk This figures includes the fact that aircraft emissions are about 2.7 times more damaging than those from other industries at ground level.

³ Target 60% cut by 2050 set in the Energy White Paper 2004.

⁴ Letter from David Miliband to Gordon Brown. Mail on Sunday. 29 October 2006

⁵ Gatwick Airport Interim Master Plan October 2006. Paragraph 9.47

⁶ No piers are shown on the map published with the Master Plan

⁷ BA Response to Air Transport Consultation. May 2003

⁸ BAA. Response to Air Transport Consultation. May 2003

⁹ Hill at west end of runway not mentioned in new Master Plan.

¹⁰ Air Transport White Paper 2003

¹¹ Climate Change and Taxing Air Travel. MORI. May 2006. <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/polls/2006/aet.shtml>