



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

2 March 2021

Robert Courts MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Dear Robert,

We are writing as members of the Gatwick Co-ordination Group whose communities are affected by the operations of Gatwick Airport, in relation to the Department for Transport's open consultation on night flight restrictions.

Since 2006 there has been no fundamental review of the night flight regime. Night flights cause issues to every single community close to an affected Airport. Even during the Coronavirus pandemic, the continuation of flights during night has resulted in complaints relating to continuing aviation noise. As a result, it is essential that the Government looks at the night flight regime as it is this, rather than frequency of flights, which are causing issues for communities.

Consequently, we would request that the regime not be rolled forward for an additional two years without a thorough and comprehensive review of the costs and benefits of night flights, especially during a period where there is greater availability during day time hours for flying.

Second, we have been extremely disappointed over the course of the pandemic that night flights have continued to operate from Gatwick Airport. The current reduction on traffic more generally provides the Government an ideal opportunity to take more seriously the extensive health costs they have on local communities. This should include mechanisms where night flights can only be allowed where there is strong and overwhelming evidence that they have a substantial net benefit by operating, a tangible example of the Government's commitment to ensuring the aviation industry recovers strongly.

Third, as part of this consultation we would be grateful if you could consider whether it is appropriate to ensure that all airports affected, including Gatwick, have strong pricing disincentives for airlines to operate at night. These should reflect the wider impacts of night flights to communities, and make sure that all night flights are operated by the least noisy categories of aircraft.

We look forward to contributing further to the consultation on the long-term future of night flights over the coming weeks. However, we are keen to ensure that the recovery of the

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aviation sector is done so sustainably, and feel that changes to the night flights regime in the short term is an essential way in which this can happen.

Best wishes,

SIR PAUL BERESFORD MP, Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

CRISPIN BLUNT MP, Member of Parliament for Reigate

THE RT HON GREG CLARK MP, Member of Parliament for Tunbridge Wells

ANDREW GRIFFITH MP, Member of Parliament for Arundel and South Downs

TOM TUGENDHAT MP, Member of Parliament for Tonbridge and Malling

CC:

Gillian Keegan MP, Member of Parliament for Chichester

Jeremy Quin MP, Member of Parliament for Horsham