



GATWICK AREA CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

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GACC RESPONDS TO GATWICK EXPANSION CONSULTATION

- ***Expansion would have few benefits and huge impacts***
- ***Consultation not fit for purpose***

The Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC) has responded to Gatwick's consultation on its proposals to expand the airport.

GACC strongly opposes the proposed expansion and any further growth at Gatwick.

GACC's analysis of Gatwick's proposals shows that growth at the airport would have few benefits but serious climate change consequences and devastating impacts on local communities and people under flight paths.

The benefits Gatwick claims for the project centre on additional employment and economic growth. However, the airport's own consultants, Oxera, say "*We do not expect the Project to ... generate employment impacts at a national level*".² Any local job creation would therefore be by displacement from other regions and so inconsistent with the government's levelling up agenda.

GACC has commissioned an independent analysis of the economic claims in the consultation by the New Economics Foundation.³ This shows that Gatwick's assessment of economic benefits is based on unsupportable or out-of-date assumptions, omissions and errors. It is likely that the scheme in fact has a negative net present value and therefore represents a highly unattractive proposition from a public interest perspective.

By contrast expansion of Gatwick would have very significant adverse climate change and community impacts. It would:

- Increase the airport's CO₂ emissions by nearly 50% from 2018. Emissions attributable to Gatwick would grow from less than 1% of total UK emissions in 2019 to over 5.5% by 2038.
- Increase car travel to the airport by over 40% compared to 2019, causing congestion and impacting air quality.

- Increase flights by 35%, causing substantially more aircraft noise across large parts of Surrey, Sussex and Kent.

In addition, GACC has concluded that the consultation is not fit for purpose because it gives an erroneous and misleading impression of the need for the development, uses projections that are not consistent with the Airports National Policy Statement, contains material errors and omissions in its economic analysis (and so gives a misleading impression of the benefits and costs of the proposed development) and mischaracterises the noise impacts of the proposed development.

In our view the consultation fails to meet the requirements of the Planning Act. Any planning application based on it should be rejected on the grounds of inadequate consultation.

Peter Barclay, Chairman of GACC, said:

“Gatwick’s proposals are opportunistic and have no merit. Its case for growth simply doesn’t stack up and the consequences are unthinkable. It would be completely unacceptable to allow CO₂ increases and other climate and community impacts on the scale proposed just to facilitate an increase in leisure travel, mainly for the benefit of frequent flyers.

It’s remarkable that at a time when aviation’s climate and other impacts are under scrutiny as never before, Gatwick should choose to bring forward these grotesque proposals. The airport should focus on cleaning up its act by reducing its already huge climate, noise and other impacts rather than trying to enrich its shareholders”.

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Notes for Editors:

1) GACC’s response to Gatwick’s consultation is available here:

<https://www.gacc.org.uk/resources/response/GACC%20FULL%20QUESTIONNAIRE%20RESPONSE%20FINAL.pdf>

2) Oxera report, paragraph 4.93:

<https://www.gatwickairport.com/globalassets/company/future-plans/northern-runway/2021/eia.pdf>

3) The New Economics Foundation’s report is available here:

https://www.gacc.org.uk/resources/NEF%20Gatwick%20Airport%20consultation_08.11.2021.pdf

Contact Peter Barclay at GACC’s Campaign Office on 01293 868821 or email info@gacc.org.uk.

GACC’s aims are to protect and improve the environment in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport and to diminish any wider environmental impact of its operations, with particular regard to noise, congestion, air quality, light pollution and climate change.