



GATWICK AREA CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

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Dear Tom,

We were disappointed that the letter sent to the Secretary of State on 22 July excluded many of the comments we had made on the draft, both at the GATCOM meeting on 16 July and subsequently in writing. We were also surprised that, in the light of our comments, there was not an opportunity to comment further on the letter before it was sent.

We are therefore writing to make clear that GACC fundamentally disagrees with a number of key aspects of the letter and is therefore concerned that it has been sent in the name of GATCOM as a whole.

To be clear, we very much welcome the letter's assertion that GATCOM supports a balanced approach to economic and environmental measures and its call for sustainable growth measures to address both climate change and the other environmental impacts of the airport's operations. However, we do not endorse the unconditional support for the proposals Gatwick Airport Limited has made to Government.

As a matter of principle we do not believe GATCOM should be acting as a lobbyist on behalf of the airport.

More specifically we believe that:

an extended furlough scheme should only be supported if it was to be accompanied by a commitment from GAL to continue employment for furloughed staff, on current terms and conditions, at the end of the scheme.

GATCOM should not support GAL's business rates and cost reduction proposals. In our view, support for these proposals is misconceived in two key respects. First, aviation is already materially under-taxed, leading to unsustainable demand and a failure to apply the "polluter pays" principles to the sector. Further tax reductions would worsen this position. Secondly, it is extremely unlikely that these proposals would have any material impact on local employment or the local economy, but would, of course, improve GAL's profitability. We do not believe it is appropriate for GATCOM to lobby government to make fiscal or regulatory changes that benefit the airport in this way.

Campaigning for a better environment for the whole area around Gatwick

GACC, founded in 1968, has as paid-up members over 50 councils and over 40 community groups. We have built a reputation for sound judgement and reliable information and thus have the support of all local Members of Parliament.

GATCOM's support for any of GAL's proposals should be conditional on the airport agreeing with government and local stakeholders a package of environmental and noise benefits to be implemented as growth resumes, whilst ensuring that, in the longer term, any growth beyond 2019 levels should be subject to full planning scrutiny and consent.

Given the significance of these matters, we would like to meet to discuss our concerns (Zoom or other) and hope that a meeting date can be arranged as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Barclay', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Peter Barclay
Chairman,
GACC