

GACC NEWSLETTER

Number 144

JUNE 1st 2025

This Newsletter is mainly to respond to the Secretary of State's deadline of June 9th

Here's a reminder of what and where we're at.

Gatwick wants to expand from 46 million passenger and 283,000 flights in 2019 to over 80 million passengers and 386,000 flights per annum. If approved it would become as big as Heathrow was (in passenger terms) before Covid. This will have significant climate change, noise, air quality, local transport and other negative impacts.

The Secretary of State for Transport (SoS) stated in February, despite the Examining Authority (ExA)'s recommendation to refuse the application, that she was minded to approve the proposal subject to Gatwick agreeing some changes. These were particularly concerns about noise and surface transport.

Gatwick had until the end of April to respond to the suggested changes. We've now looked at Gatwick's response and have drafted our own challenge to their proposals.

This will be submitted by the deadline of 9th June. We've outlined below the key points we will be making in our response to assist you in responding. Please use your own words but feel free to utilise any of our comments.

Firstly you should state your objection to the proposed expansion of Gatwick Airport, and then state that if the government does approve expansion, it should be subject to strict environmental, noise and other controls. GACC, reassert that Gatwick must meet its required noise limits, carbon limits and surface access mode share – and that the meeting of all these requirements should all be linked to the annual permission from government to allocate slots at the airport.

Noise

Support the Examining Authority's noise insulation proposals.

However the proposed noise limits, even as amended by the SoS, do not achieve the policy requirements that the benefits of growth should be shared between the aviation industry and local communities and achieve a balance between growth and noise reduction. To achieve the policy the limits should be reduced further at a pace and to an extent that achieves a genuine sharing of the benefits of growth or the government should mandate alternative noise benefits.

Expansion should be accompanied by a ban on all night flights as mandated for Heathrow.

There should be noise limits for all periods of the year, not just the peak summer period.

There should be an agreed process for renewing noise limits downwards over time.

Surface Transport

We support the ExA in requiring a stronger version of Regulation 20.

The basic problem is that if the surface transport volume differs to that which is modelled, Gatwick must fund measures to accommodate that change. Therefore, we support the ExA's view and the need for greater committed investment by Gatwick in public transport and not just road widening.

We do not support the alternative metric of number of cars travelling to and from the airport as suggested by GAL.

We restate our previous concern that all off airport parking, authorised or unauthorised, be excluded from sustainable transport modal share figures.

Need

Gatwick Airport's 24 April 2025 letter provides no further evidence to counter the position set out by the ExA.

Gatwick have still not substantiated their estimates of future business travel which was highlighted by the ExA in their report. Gatwick have also failed to include the DfT and BEIS-approved adjustment for non-CO2 emissions (not even in their most recent submission on 24 April 2025) which increases the environmental cost of the scheme by a further £4bn. Together, these changes mean that the expansion has no net economic benefit as stated in submissions by the New Economics Foundation. Therefore we believe the moderate weighting given to economic aspects by the ExA is too high.

Gatwick again claim a positive benefit due to inbound tourism but have still failed to quantify the far greater GVA (economic dis-benefit) of outbound tourism from Gatwick, which would add further to the negative GVA from the development.

GACC assert that the expansion of Eurostar should be prioritised before expansion of London airports. Eurostar's expansion plans would increase train capacity by 2.5 times, which would limit the need for London flights. This should be reflected in the assessment of need and the SoS decision.

Climate Change

GACC contend that the Greenhouse Gas Emissions of this scheme, increase emissions by a significant amount (considering all increases in carbon emissions and the risk Jet Zero projections are not materialised) at a time when emissions should be reduced. The proposed development would lead to one of the largest net negative impacts on the climate of any decision taken in the UK in the 21st century to-date; with no mitigations proposed that would remove that impact.

The greenhouse gas emissions should therefore be judged as major adverse, and similarly should be judged to give "major weight" to greenhouse gases against the proposed development in the planning balance.

Water Management

It is expected that as future demand will continue to increase (due to housing as well as the Gatwick Airport future baseline case) and *appears that Thames Water plan to continue to operate the STWs around Gatwick with inadequate capacity for many years to come* – even without the potential need to accommodate Gatwick expansion.

The revised form of Requirement 31 is judged inadequate. It would embed, and risks completely failing to address the Horley Sewage Treatment Works (STW) capacity shortfalls that still remain going forward. The new GAL-Thames Water agreement contrasts capacity increase needed by Gatwick to current rather than future increased capacity needs around the airport.

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Please contact us at [info@gacc.org.uk](mailto:info@gacc.org.uk) if you would like to discuss any of the above in more detail or have suggestions to add to this latest consultation by the Government.

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Fundraiser for Legal Challenges

To meet the legal challenges GACC has launched a fundraising campaign to support these challenges.

The link to the campaign is here: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/gacc/>

Please donate to the campaign to help us continue to challenge the expansion of Gatwick Airport and the disastrous consequences that expansion would have on local people as well as globally. With your support we can ensure that issues like night flights, noise, air quality, and climate change do not go unnoticed. Commitments and promises dropped will not go unchallenged and we will keep on working to stop Gatwick's unsustainable expansion from becoming a terrible reality.

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Joining GACC: please spread the word

Please encourage your friends, family and neighbours to join GACC and help protect the interests of communities around the airport and under flight paths. Information on how to join is on our website here: <http://www.gacc.org.uk/contact-us.php>.

GACC contact details

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