

GACC NEWSLETTER

Number 131
December 2021

Dear Members

A huge thanks to everyone who responded to Gatwick's expansion consultation, which closed on 1 December. Our thanks also to the professional experts and organisations who advised us on the many errors, omissions and other weaknesses in the consultation. We engaged expert advice on economic and employment issues, noise, transport and climate impacts. And last but by no means least my personal thanks to all the GACC committee for their tireless efforts in putting together a thorough and robust response.

According to Gatwick there were thousands of responses. Those we have seen ranged from outright rejection of Gatwick's proposals (including from Kent County Council and several local MPs) to significant concern and scepticism. The latter group included local authorities that have previously been supportive of expansion at Gatwick, such as East Sussex County Council.

The local authorities as a whole, from County Councils to Parish Councils, have criticised many aspects of Gatwick's proposals, particularly the lack of a convincing rationale for expansion, and the climate, congestion, noise, air quality and other impacts it would have. Many Councils also challenged the adequacy of the consultation itself, including the lack of information in some areas, the failure to engage properly on key issues and Gatwick's refusal to answer some questions raised during the process.

Consultation not fit for purpose

For the reasons set out in our November newsletter, our view is that the consultation was not fit for purpose. We do not believe it met the requirements of the Planning Act and we consider that any planning application based on it should be rejected on the grounds of inadequate consultation unless and until a further, full, consultation is carried out.

In due course the Planning Inspectorate will ask local authorities for their formal views on the adequacy of the consultation. We have therefore written to all relevant local authorities to explain why we feel the process has not met the standards required. Our letter is [here](#). We have also written to the Planning Inspectorate itself.

The next stage will be a detailed analysis of responses by Gatwick. They then have to decide whether to proceed with a formal application to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the Development Consent Order process and, if so, whether to amend any aspect of their proposals. If they do proceed an application is likely to be submitted towards the end of 2022. As part of any application there would be a Consultation Report explaining the outcome of the consultation.

GACC Committee

GACC Committee member Peter Jordan has asked to step down from the Committee to focus on other local interests. Peter has been a member of GACC and its Committee for many years and we are hugely grateful to him for everything he's contributed, particularly his encyclopaedic knowledge of issues in the Crawley area and his incisive and analytical approach to addressing those issues. Most recently he led the work to update GACC's constitution, which was approved at the last AGM. We will miss him.

The Committee has agreed to co-opt Fran Flammiger until the next AGM. Fran has been extensively involved in airport campaigning and was Vice Chair of local group Plane Wrong until mid 2020. She participated in much of the work of the first Noise Management Board. She has a background in

marketing and education and we welcome her warmly to the Committee. Fran will represent GACC on Gatwick's Noise Management Board Community Forum.

Noise Management Board

Some of the work of the Noise Management Board has been deferred whilst traffic levels remain low. In particular actions that require observation of significant levels of traffic, and airspace trials, are not currently practicable and will not happen until volumes increase.

In other areas - such as on night flights and Gatwick's noise envelope proposals - we feel the NMB's leadership has been too passive and we are encouraging them to do more. There are, however, potentially valuable studies underway on the fair and equitable distribution of flights and the joining point for flights at night. We await the results of these with interest.

Following an election conducted by the NMB's Chairman, Fran Flammiger and Charles Lloyd have been appointed as the community representatives on the NMB Executive Board. Atholl Forbes, chair of Community Group PAGNE, had carried out that role since the creation of the new Noise Management Board but decided not to seek re-election this time. We are very grateful for all Atholl has done to ensure community views are communicated clearly and firmly to the NMB.

The year ahead

2022 promises to be another busy year for GACC.

The shape of aviation should become clearer as and when the industry recovers from COVID, and there are important government policy announcements due on the industry's climate impacts and on the future strategic framework for aviation. The regulation of aviation noise will also be in the spotlight, following pressure on government to look again at this important but neglected area. Finally the airspace modernisation process will progress, both at Gatwick and nationally, with potentially important consequences for local communities and people under flight paths.

We are participating in much of this work through our membership of the Aviation Environment Federation and Aviation Communities Forum and look forward to continuing to work closely with them and like-minded campaign groups around the country.

In the meantime, a very Happy Christmas to all our members and supporters and a safe and Happy New Year

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

Email: info@gacc.org.uk

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