

Emailed to: feedback@gatwickfutureplans.com

30 November 2021

To whom it may concern,

Gatwick Northern Runway Project Consultation

I am writing to you as lead officer for Transport for the South East (TfSE) in response to the consultation on Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Proposals.

Transport for the South East (TfSE) is a sub-national transport body (STB) that represents sixteen local transport authorities. These are Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Medway, Surrey, West Sussex, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, and the six Berkshire unitary authorities.

These authorities are represented on the Partnership Board along with representatives from the region's five Local Enterprise Partnerships, District and Borough authorities, the protected landscapes in the TfSE area, National Highways, Network Rail and Transport for London. TfSE provides a single voice from across its geography on the transport interventions needed to support sustainable economic growth.

Our transport strategy was agreed by the Partnership Board in July 2020. It sets out a 2050 vision for the development of the South East transport system, which includes a commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, at the latest. One of the key principles underpinning the vision for our strategy is to achieve sustainable economic growth that leads to positive social and environmental outcomes.

Gatwick Airport sits at the centre of the TfSE geography and is recognised as an important economic asset for the South East. It facilitates the movement of goods and services across the region and the UK, as well as supporting access to international markets. It is also a key employer in the area and generates employment through a significant local and national supply chain that supports its operations.

We understand that proposals for the project are currently at the pre-application stage of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process therefore a formal response will be submitted at the acceptance stage. At this point in the process insufficient information has been provided about the potential impacts of the expansion plans and the way in which the adverse impacts that have been identified to date would be appropriately mitigated. As a consequence, TfSE is not in a position to either support or oppose Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Proposals at this time. There are a number of aspects of the proposals which require further consideration. This will enable the proposals to be reviewed and refined before they are formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Carbon emissions and climate change

Transport is currently the single biggest contributor to Green House Gas emissions. Action needs to be undertaken to address this and our transport strategy includes a commitment to meet the Government's target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, at the latest.

It is noted that the Preliminary Environmental Impact Report suggests that there will be an increase in overall carbon emissions of 1.387 MtCO₂e at the 2038 assessment year as a consequence of the expansion plans. The Government's recently published Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), and the Jet Zero consultation, sets the government's commitments and the actions needed to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. It is clear that to deliver the commitments set out in the TDP, bold actions will be necessary. The non-technical summary report on the Preliminary Environmental Assessment states that a Carbon and Climate Change Action Plan is being drafted that will set out how the impact on Greenhouse Gas Emissions are to be mitigated. This report will be published with the application for development consent. Until this report is available, it will not be possible to determine the extent to which the expansion plans will contribute to the Government's mandated target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Noise

Communities that live under the flight paths of the Airport are already affected by aircraft noise. The potential increase in the number of flights resulting from future expansion would mean more noise disturbance. The proposed introduction of a new and improved Noise Insulation Scheme, a Homeowners Assisted Moving Scheme and a proposed 'noise envelope' to set limits and manage noise from future operations at Gatwick are noted. Further information will need to be provided as the proposals develop to identify whether the

proposed mitigation measures will be sufficient to address the impact on quality of life of those communities that will have increased external noise levels as a result of the expansion plans.

Transport and surface access

The proposed expansion of Gatwick Airport will have significant impacts on the transport system in and around the surrounding areas of Gatwick Airport and these impacts will need to be satisfactorily addressed. TfSE expects Gatwick Airport to provide further information and clarification on how the additional demand resulting from the possible expansion of the airport will be accommodated.

Gatwick Airport Limited should be promoting sustainable travel modes as the preferred method of transport to and from the airport for passengers and staff. However, the main measures to mitigate the likely surface transport impacts set out in the consultation material are local highway improvements and a plan to provide an additional 18,500 car parking spaces. The need for this quantity of additional car parking spaces is unclear and further clarification about this is required. The current objectives for increasing both passenger travel (60% of passengers using sustainable transport by 2030, from 48% in 2020); and more importantly staff travel (60% of staff journeys to work using sustainable transport by 2030, from 39% in the 2016) to the airport by sustainable forms of transport are not ambitious enough and more will need to be done to promote the use of these modes of transport by both passengers and staff.

Employment and economy

The projected increase of 18,400 additional job opportunities by 2038 is to be welcomed. It is noted that over 50% of these jobs would be in the higher and semi-skilled categories such as pilots, air traffic controllers and flight operations staff, customs, immigration, police, fire staff, and information technology roles. We note that an Employment, Skills and Business Strategy Implementation Plan is currently being drafted and would wish to review this when this is published to identify how the employment opportunities arising from potential airport expansion could be maximised. In particular it will be important to identify what can be done to make the 50% lower skilled sustainable in the longer term through career progression opportunities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, at this point in the process TfSE's position is that it neither supports nor opposes the proposals to bring the northern runway into regular routine use. As has been highlighted in this response, there are a number of aspects of the proposals where further information is required to enable the

potential impacts of the proposals to be more fully assessed. In addition, clear and robust strategies need to be developed to deal with the potential impacts of the proposed expansion plans on carbon emission and noise and ensure that a greater proportion of those travelling to the airport as passengers or employees can do so using sustainable forms of transport. It is vital that all of the documentation and supporting information relating to the proposals is made available to enable thorough scrutiny as the proposals progress through the DCO process. In the meantime, the Airport will continue to be an important consideration for TfSE as we continue to develop our Transport Strategy. We will welcome continued engagement with Gatwick Airport Limited as your expansion proposals are developed further and appreciate there will be further opportunities to respond during the DCO process.

This is an officer response. The TfSE Partnership Board meets on 24 January 2022 and will consider this draft response and a further iteration of it may therefore follow.

Yours sincerely,



Rupert Clubb
Lead Officer
Transport for the South East