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15 May 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

GATWICK AIRPORT LIMITED: RUNWAY OPTIONS CONSULTATION

I refer to your consultation on the possible options for a second runway at Gatwick.

As Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) knows there are many differing views across the membership of GATCOM as to whether or not there should be a second runway at Gatwick.

The Committee recognises the important role of Gatwick Airport in maintaining a vibrant and growing economy for the Gatwick region and that it is one of the region's major economic generators. This is a position that needs to be protected and supported. However, while some members of GATCOM see the potential national and regional economic benefits of an additional runway at Gatwick as outweighing the potential environmental and infrastructure disbenefits, there are other members who do not, and, in addition, some organisations represented on the Committee have not yet formed a judgment and will not do so at this stage in the Airports Commission's deliberations.

As a result, GATCOM is not in a position to express a view on any second runway option but the Committee would like to highlight points of common interest and concern.

Following my consultation with GATCOM members seeking views, a number of those common points previously expressed by GATCOM to the Airports Commission have been reiterated and this is the basis on which GATCOM is responding to your consultation.

GATCOM fully supports the efforts of GAL to position itself as "London's airport of choice" by delivering a good overall passenger experience, tailored to the needs of the individual passenger. However, as the airport grows and passenger numbers increase GATCOM is keen to ensure that such growth and future expansion does not diminish or have a detrimental impact on the quality of the passenger experience or on the quality of life for local communities around the airport and the wider region affected by the airport. We want to see the impact of Gatwick's growth on local communities and the environment contained, minimised and mitigated wherever possible. We are anxious to ensure that GAL takes into consideration all the potential benefits and disbenefits resulting from an additional runway at Gatwick and the impacts of growth on the region's supporting infrastructure, including (but not restricted to) surface transport, housing, hospitals, schools and labour markets, that the potential environmental and urbanising impacts are fully assessed and robust evidence is provided on how such impacts will be mitigated.

BY EMAIL TO:

Gatwick Runway Consultation
IPSOS MORI

Surface transport

An important element of ensuring the sustainable growth of Gatwick and maintaining a good passenger experience is the provision of good surface transport links between the airport, London and the South Coast, and to other parts of the country. Effective, efficient and resilient transport infrastructure, particularly rail, benefits not just passengers and staff but also the regional economy and the wider local community, as well as helping to manage the airport's overall environmental impact.

It is noted that many of the surface transport improvements set out in the consultation document are those that are already committed and planned and will take place with or without a second runway. It is also noted that GAL believes that those improvements will help to support the additional infrastructure that would be needed if a second runway development progresses. We support the proposed target of 60% of passengers to travel to and from Gatwick by public transport by 2040, but we have concerns about the capability of the highways and rail networks coping with the incremental growth arising from the use of a second runway and the consequential growth in the region over that period of time. We would therefore like to understand more about the expectations for increases to capacity and resilience, particularly in respect of the capacity of the Brighton Main Line and Gatwick railway station, and what mechanisms will be put in place to ensure suitable financial contributions are forthcoming at the appropriate time.

As regards specific comments, GATCOM raises the following points for consideration:

- The need for improved rail links, particularly to areas to the east of Gatwick and Kent and the upgrading of the North Downs Line, both of which would be an essential element of the surface transport infrastructure package.
- The need to secure early morning and late evening rail service connectivity to match flight schedules and staff work patterns.
- Gatwick railway station – should the plans include the possibility of an eighth platform in the longer term to capitalise on Gatwick's potential as a major transport hub?
- Motorway network – it is noted that all three runway options show that access from the motorway will be via a single, albeit modified, junction. While we strongly support GAL's aspiration for a 60% public transport modal split target, GATCOM believes that there may still be a need in the longer term to further improve access and resilience by providing links from two motorway junctions.
- Gatwick Gateway – GATCOM fully supports the concept of providing a world class transport interchange at Gatwick which provides a seamless and efficient transfer between all modes of transport for airport passengers and users as well as communities in the region. We welcome the fact that the Gatwick Gateway is regarded by GAL as a standalone project, is not dependent on a second runway and will go ahead regardless of the conclusions of the current Airports Commission study. However, we are disappointed that the coach and bus component of such an interchange has not been incorporated in the current plans but only in the second runway plans. We urge GAL to ensure that the Gatwick Gateway project delivers a multi-modal interchange, providing access to rail, bus, coach and taxi services and not be dependent on the second runway project.

Employment land

As mentioned at the last GATCOM meeting, there is concern about the loss of employment land to the south of the airport and the need to find suitable alternative sites. The business community in particular hopes that GAL will engage and work with local authorities and other organisations/agencies to identify and provide or enable a net increase in employment land over time to accommodate incremental economic growth.

Future flight paths

While GATCOM appreciates that the work on designing the use of airspace and flight paths around Gatwick's single runway operation as part of the London Airspace Management Programme is currently under way, we are concerned about the lack of information on the flight paths that would be introduced in the event of a new runway. It is noted that NATS is to lead on the process of designing the airspace for a future two-runway Gatwick. It would be helpful if

some indication could be given as to the time frame of that work, the possible joining points for the centre line of the new runway and the key factors and impacts that would be taken into consideration. There is a view among some of our members that the introduction of new flight paths over areas previously not affected by overflying could be as significant an issue as the urbanising effects and impact on the local economy of a new runway.

Passenger experience

GATCOM welcomes the Airports Commission's wish that GAL should provide other stakeholders such as passengers and airport users with the opportunity to make their views known. The views of our Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) have been sought and the comments of its members are attached. The PAG's views have been endorsed by the wider GATCOM membership. You will note that a number of the points raised by PAG have been specifically incorporated into this response and we commend all their points.

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the consultation. I trust GATCOM's views will be taken into account in the future development of GAL's position on these matters.

Yours faithfully,



Assistant Secretary

PASSENGER ADVISORY GROUP'S COMMENTS

1. Surface Access

Road

Plans for all three runway options show that access from the motorway network will be through a single, albeit modified, junction. Despite ambitions for 60% of airport users to use public transport, a significant number of passengers will rely on car access. Additional passenger numbers and the effect of changing the road layouts around the airport lead us to urge planners to improve access and resilience by providing links from two motorway junctions.

Long term parking

Plans to operate a single long-term car park located east of the railway make sense. Published plans do not show how passengers will access the terminals. PAG urges Gatwick to:

- incorporate two means of crossing the rail line and not to rely on a single link to the long term car park
- provide a direct link to each of the terminals from the long term car park, not merely to the South Terminal where passengers would have to change to the inter-terminal APM
- incorporate a modern APM style link from the long term car park to the terminals rather than relying on coach transfers into the new era.

Rail

PAG totally supports the target of 60% access by public transport with rail handling the lion's share.

2. Gatwick Gateway

PAG's understanding was that Gatwick Gateway will be developed as a separate project, not dependent on Runway 2, to provide a much needed multi-mode transport interchange. Whilst PAG has yet to see any preliminary plans for Gatwick Gateway, it is concerned to read that the bus/coach component of such an interchange is incorporated into R2 plans. PAG urges GAL to ensure that the standalone Gatwick Gateway project delivers access to rail, bus and coach services and is not just a rail concourse development. Otherwise, if R2 is not developed, Gatwick will continue without an effective transport interchange for the next generation of passengers.

3. Terminal Facilities

The consultation document is the first time that PAG has seen any proposals about terminal facilities. As detailed proposals are developed, PAG confirms a request that has already been made to GAL for the design of the passenger experience to be based on a reduced maximum walking distance from terminal entrance to the aircraft. PAG proposes that Gatwick should have 'shorter walking distances' as a competitive advantage by adopting 400 yards as the maximum distance (current maximum is 650).

A new pier linked to the terminal by an underground Automated People Mover features in plans for all three options. In plans for Options 2 and 3, the remote pier appears to be over half the length of the runway (i.e. 1 mile long). PAG believes that designs should incorporate two access points from the APM under the new remote pier in Option 1 and three access points in Options 2 and 3. In all options, plans should also incorporate seats every 50 yards. PAG draws GAL's attention to the new facility in Detroit's Metropolitan Airport which has adopted such an approach.

4. Costs

As GAL has to provide cost estimates to the Airports Commission, PAG urges that improving the passenger experience should not be sacrificed to keep the cost artificially low.