

## **GATCOM**

**14 OCTOBER 2021**

### **GATWICK NORTHERN RUNWAY – PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION**

#### **REPORT BY SECRETARIAT**

##### **SUMMARY**

This paper gives details of GATCOM's previous positions and discussions on GAL's plans for growth, GAL's consultation on its Northern Runway project and outlines a suggested GATCOM approach to responding to GAL's pre-application consultation. GATCOM is asked to agree to the holding of a Special Meeting at the end of November to consider and agree its response to the consultation. Members are also asked to share at the meeting their organisations' initial thoughts and concerns about the consultation proposals.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2019 was published by GAL on 18 July 2019 following public consultation in Winter 2018. The Master Plan contains three scenarios for growth:

- Scenario 1 - using the existing runway to accommodate growth from the then 45.7 mppa to between 57-61 mppa in 2032 with an increase in Air Traffic Movements (ATMs) from the existing 280,790 to between 315,000 - 340,000 ATMs per annum. There are no planning obligations or conditions imposed limiting the number of ATMs or the number of passengers that may use the airport (apart from the number of night jet movements).
- Scenario 2 - routinely using the existing standby (also known as the 'maintenance', 'emergency' or 'northern') runway for some aircraft departures only alongside the use of the existing runway. This could provide additional capacity within the airport's existing footprint accommodating growth from the then 45.7 mppa in 2018 to between 68 - 70 mppa in 2032 and an increase in ATMs from 280,790 per annum to between 375,000 - 390,000 per annum. This growth scenario is required to be progressed through a Development Consent Order (DCO) application (under the Planning Act 2008) which provides a rigorous planning consent process for nationally significant infrastructure projects. A DCO is examined by the Planning Inspectorate with the ultimate decision being taken by the Secretary of State.
- Scenario 3 - continuing to safeguard land to the south for an additional runway should Government policy support this in the future. This land has been safeguarded in policy terms since 2003.

1.2 At the time of publishing the new Airport Master Plan, GAL announced that it would commence work on plans to bring into routine use the Northern Runway for some departing aircraft (Growth Scenario 2).

1.3 On 9 September GAL launched its 12 weeks public consultation on plans to bring its Northern Runway into routine use. The consultation will run from 9 September 2021 to 1 December 2021 with all consultation documents available on GAL's website at [www.gatwickairport.com/futureplans](http://www.gatwickairport.com/futureplans). The [consultation documents](#) includes a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which identifies the scope of the proposals and the preliminary likely significant impacts of the Northern Runway project,

together with any required mitigation. GAL has also put in place a [virtual exhibition](#), [book a telephone surgery](#) with project experts and [a mobile project office](#) to enable people to review the plans in detail. GAL has also produced a [Northern Runway Newsletter](#).

1.4 At the time of writing this report, the consultation has only been running for 4 weeks. It is therefore too early in the consultation process for GATCOM to give detailed consideration to the implications and impacts of the project and the key issues for GATCOM's member organisations. This paper therefore sets out for GATCOM's consideration a suggested approach for considering and responding to the consultation.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 GATCOM highlighted at a very early stage in the development of the draft Gatwick Airport Master Plan that given the many differing views across GATCOM's membership about Gatwick's vision for growth, **the Committee neither supported nor opposed GAL's vision for growth**. It is important for GATCOM to maintain that view.

2.2 Since the publication of the Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2019, GATCOM has received regular updates from GAL on how it is taking forward its growth scenarios. Explanations have been given on how passenger numbers will increase, the extensive capital investment programme (pre-COVID), how GAL has managed and mitigated the impacts of growth, with examples of initiatives that have been in place for many years. A summary of GATCOM's consideration of Gatwick's growth plans and the various matters that have been raised by the Committee is summarised in Appendix 1.

## 3. THE DCO PROCESS

3.1 At its meeting in April 2021 GATCOM received a [presentation](#) from the Planning Inspectorate outlining the various stages of the DCO process and opportunities for interested parties to engage in the process. As emphasised during that presentation the DCO process looks for transparency from the applicant (in the case of the Northern Runway Project this is GAL) in what they are applying for, transparency in the process for all stakeholders, and to give a clear understanding and certainty of the various statutory timescales for each part of the process and at what stage in the process interested parties can get involved.

3.2 The Pre-application Stage, the current stage of the Northern Runway Project, is the key stage of the process. This is an important stage as once an application is submitted to the Inspectorate it is extremely difficult to make a change or request a change to the application for the project. Although the Planning Act 2008 is not prescriptive, the spirit of the Act is about front-loading the DCO process and early engagement with stakeholders and others. The [MHCLG guidance](#) on the pre-application stage of the DCO process emphasises the benefits that the early involvement of local authorities (and communities and statutory consultees) can bring. It also states in paragraph 15 of that guidance that effective consultation will lead to *"applications which are better developed and better understood by the public, and in which the important issues have been articulated and considered as far as possible in advance of submission of the application to the Secretary of State. This in turn will allow for shorter and more efficient examinations"*.

3.3 GATCOM does not have any prescribed status in the process. However, local authorities (Counties, Boroughs and Districts) have a prescribed and important role –

see [Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 2](#). This provides another route for GATCOM to input comments and advice. In addition to their statutory functions, local authorities are the communities' champions. It will be important therefore that GATCOM advises GAL as well as the Gatwick local authorities of its views on matters that need to be addressed as the project design evolves.

#### **4. NORTHERN RUNWAY PROJECT**

4.1 GAL hosted a stakeholder briefing for GATCOM members and their support officers on 23 September to outline the main details of the project. The standard overview [briefing presentation slides](#) used by GAL are available on GAL's website.

4.2 The Secretariat has reviewed of the consultation material. Some of the key elements of the project comprise:

- repositioning of the Northern Runway (12m north) and reconfiguration of taxiways. Flights departing from the Northern Runway would continue to use existing flightpaths;
- expansion of both the North and South terminal buildings;
- a new Pier (no.7) and amendments to aircraft stands;
- other airport facilities including a waste (CARE) facility, a new hangar, new fire training grounds;
- new office space (9,000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace) and 1,000 new hotel rooms over three new hotels;
- an additional 18,500 car parking spaces;
- road improvement works to the South Terminal Roundabout, North Terminal Roundabout, and Longbridge roundabout; and
- environmental and mitigation measures, including new runoff and storage ponds and flood compensation areas. GAL also proposes to commit to a maximum noise envelope at the start of dual runway operations based on the 51 dB Leq contour. This will be slightly higher than the 2019 contour but will also commit to this becoming smaller than the 2019 contour as ATMs grow. An improved noise insulation scheme for households with an inner zone and outer zone is also proposed, and a Home Relocation Support Scheme.

4.3 As regards carbon and climate change, GAL is developing a Carbon and Climate Change Action Plan covering airport operations, surface transport, and flights; the latter being the greatest challenge to mitigate. Government policy guidance is expected, following the recent Jet Zero consultation, on the targets to be met by UK aviation to ensure that the UK meets its climate change commitments. GAL has given a commitment to ensure the Northern Runway project proposals are aligned with government commitments in this area.

4.4 The Northern Runway will be operational by summer 2029, with the construction of other elements continuing until 2038 as the airport grows.

4.5 GAL believes the Northern Runway project aligns with Government policy of making best use of existing runways at all UK airports. The Minister for Aviation's [response](#) to GATCOM in July 2021 confirms that "*In relation to airport capacity, this Government has been clear of its continuing support for airports making best use of their existing runways in its 2016 policy statement Beyond the horizon: The future of UK aviation - Making best use of existing runways (MBU). The Government's policy position has not changed and is not being reconsidered.*"

## **5. SUGGESTED GATCOM APPROACH**

5.1 A summary of GATCOM's consideration of Gatwick's growth plans and the various matters that have been raised by the Committee is set out in Appendix 1. Members' attention is drawn to the outcomes of the GATCOM meeting on 24 January 2019 when the Committee agreed a way forward in relation to its role in the event of GAL pursuing its vision for growth and ways in which to address other related matters. Specifically:

- GATCOM's role was to help disseminate information to interested parties and the wider community on GAL's work, the statutory planning processes which need to be followed and the issues being discussed and to assist in building an understanding of the growth scenarios, the implications and impacts through constructive discussion.
- GATCOM to explore with GAL and the local authorities potential conditions and/or undertakings GAL would be prepared to offer as part of the statutory planning process.
- GATCOM recognised that there will be differing views across the membership of the Committee but the essential need for all interests to have mutual respect for views expressed at meetings when exploring options and, where possible, to build a consensus on those matters/issues where the Committee can agree in order that it can provide constructive, balanced feedback to GAL.

5.2 Members will recall that in GATCOM's response to GAL's consultation on the draft Master Plan it had raised a number of matters, particularly in respect of the need for mitigation associated with growth scenarios 2 and 3, and specifically highlighted the need for GAL to give greater certainty about how the impacts of Gatwick's growth should be managed and mitigated. In considering its response to the current consultation, the Committee will need to review those matters previously raised to see how they have been addressed in the Northern Runway consultation material.

5.3 At the GATCOM Steering Group meeting on 23 September (held prior to GAL's stakeholder presentation in the afternoon), there was discussion on whether GATCOM should respond to the Northern Runway project consultation questions with points made both in support and opposition. Given the differing and conflicting views of members and organisations within GATCOM as well as the timing of meetings ahead of the conclusion deadline, the Steering Group agreed that a high-level statement on issues of common concern would be more appropriate and felt the Secretariat should produce a draft statement based on the views previously expressed by GATCOM in response to the master plan consultation and at various meetings since the Airport Master Plan was published if they have not been addressed in the consultation documentation. The key points/issues previously raised by GATCOM are summarised in Appendix 1.

5.4 As the consultation has only been running for 4 weeks it is too early in the consultation process for GATCOM to give detailed consideration to the implications and impacts of the project and the key issues for GATCOM's member organisations in order for a suggested draft GATCOM statement to be prepared. It is therefore suggested that a Special Meeting of GATCOM be held at the end of November (possibly 25 or 26 November) to consider and agree GATCOM's statement in response to the consultation.

5.5 Although it is early in the consultation process, members are asked to come to the meeting prepared to share initial views and areas of concern on the Northern Runway project proposals and consultation exercise so that these can be taken into account by the Secretariat in preparing the draft statement of response for consideration at the Special Meeting.

## **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That GATCOM maintains its previously agreed position that it neither supports nor opposes GAL's growth plans;
- (2) That GATCOM's previously agreed role as set out in paragraph 5.1 above be further endorsed;
- (3) That a Special Meeting of GATCOM be arranged to take place at the end of November to consider and agree its response to GAL's Northern Runway pre-application consultation;
- (4) That the Secretariat be asked to prepare a draft statement of response to the consultation based on the approach set out in paragraph 5.3 above and any other comments raised and agreed at the meeting.

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**GATWICK'S NORTHERN RUNWAY PROJECT – TIMELINE OF GATCOM'S CONSIDERATIONS AND AGREED POSITION**

GAL has updated GATCOM on its Vision for Growth and the Northern Runway Proposal regularly since the publication of the Gatwick Airport Master Plan. To assist GATCOM's consideration of and discussion on GAL's Northern Runway pre-application consultation, set out below is a timeline of GATCOM's consideration since January 2019 on key aspects of Gatwick's growth plans and the position that has been adopted by GATCOM.

**9 January 2019**

**GATCOM submitted its [response](#) to the GAL's consultation on the draft Gatwick Airport Master Plan.** As part of that response GATCOM highlighted that given there were many differing views across the membership of GATCOM about Gatwick's vision for growth, the Committee neither supported nor opposed GAL's vision for growth.

**24 January 2019**

**GATCOM [agreed](#) a way forward in relation to the Committee's role in the event of GAL pursuing its vision for growth and ways in which to address other related matters. Specifically:**

- GATCOM's role was to help disseminate information to interested parties and the wider community on GAL's work, the statutory planning processes which need to be followed and the issues being discussed and to assist in building an understanding of the growth scenarios, the implications and impacts through constructive discussion.
- GATCOM to explore with GAL and the local authorities potential conditions and/or undertakings GAL would be prepared to offer as part of the statutory planning process:
  - The need for GAL to give reassurance to local communities that GAL's vision is not to operate a three runway airport in the longer term;
  - The need to give a commitment to reduce the number of night flights at the airport as well as not to operate night flights off the standby runway;
  - The need to set out other targets and obligations linked to managing and mitigating the negative impacts arising from the future growth and the number of passengers passing through the airport, including possible financial contributions to local authorities towards improvements to supporting infrastructure. For example, based on the results of a Transport Assessment improvements to the strategic road network in the locality, such as the A22, A264, A24 –possible Crawley western relief road, and towards improvements to the motorway and rail networks.
  - The need to set out measures to address the skills challenge in the labour market to ensure that the local population can benefit from the range of highly-skilled and skilled jobs that the growth in Gatwick's operation will bring to the region.
- GATCOM also recognised that that there will be differing views across the membership of the Committee but the essential need for all interests to have mutual respect for views expressed at meetings when exploring options and, where possible, to build a consensus on those matters/issues where the Committee can agree in order that it can provide constructive, balanced feedback to GAL.
- GATCOM also identified topics where there was a need to build a greater understanding:
  - Gatwick's cargo operation and the management of its potential future growth – *GAL presented on this at [GATCOM in April 2019](#).*

- the implications of growth on employment in the region including job type, sectors, anticipated skills required, and the proportion of jobs that would be classified as skilled/semiskilled/unskilled – GATCOM had a presentation from Coast to Capital LEP on its work on the Local Industrial Strategy in [October 2019](#) and also more recently in [July 2021 in respect of Catalyst South's Airport Towns initiative](#).

### **18 July 2019**

**GAL published the Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2019 the day of the GATCOM meeting. GAL's [presentation](#) confirmed that:**

- GAL continue to make best use of its main runway using new technology to build capacity and resilience
- GAL will start the preparation of a planning application to bring the existing standby runway into routine use for some departures only alongside the use of the main runway
- GAL continued to recommend that planning policy continues to safeguard land to the south of the airport for an additional runway but at the same time confirmed that GAL was no longer actively pursuing plans for an additional runway.

### **19 September 2019**

**A special meeting of the GATCOM Steering Group, to which all GATCOM members and support officers were invited to attend, was held to discuss in detail Gatwick's growth plans and next steps.** At that meeting GAL gave a [detailed presentation](#) on the background and context to GAL's growth plans and the DCO process and timeline.

As part of those discussions GATCOM highlighted the need for GAL to actively monitor both on-airport and off-airport ultrafine particulates (UFPs) pollutants to ensure exposure levels did not increase and measures taken to reduce pollution levels.

### **22 April 2021**

**GATCOM had a [presentation](#) from the Planning Inspectorate on the DCO planning process and how people could engage in the process.**

**GATCOM also considered a comprehensive report and statement of facts on [Gatwick's Growth](#). As part of that discussion GATCOM agreed:**

- a full report should be made to GATCOM by GAL at the appropriate time on those issues of common concern and how they are intended to be addressed, resolved and mitigated, so that all parties have a clear understanding of how the social, environmental and economic impacts and benefits of growth are considered. Adopting this approach will allow a good understanding of the economic and employment benefits of growth as well as help to give reassurance to people living near the airport and under flight paths as to how the impacts are being assessed and addressed to capture all airport growth.
- The draft Heads of Terms of the new Section 106 Agreement be shared with GATCOM at the earliest possible time as part of the DCO process.

**Making Best Use of Existing Runways Policy - correspondence with the Minister for Aviation about Gatwick's growth proposals – June/July 2021**

- Secretary of State for Transport, Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps MP, [response](#) gave a comprehensive update on the Government's work in reviewing the Aviation Policy Framework. The Chairman wrote a [follow-up letter](#) to seek clarification as to whether those policies yet to be addressed by the Government include specifically the ways in which the approach outlined in the Aviation Green Paper "to ensure that necessary conditions are met in respect to infrastructure, community investment

and environmental measures” and whether this will address the issue of non-development related growth that falls outside the planning system. The Minister for Aviation’s [response](#) confirmed the policy position.