

To: The Gatwick Airport "2nd runway " consultation group. 15.10.2021

From: The Langton Green Village Trust

CC: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent County Council, Greg Clark MP, Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport.

Subject: Gatwick Airport's proposed 2nd runway.

Dear Consultation programme team,

This letter is being submitted on behalf of the Langton Green Village Trust in response to your consultation proposals about building a 2nd runway at Gatwick Airport.

Langton Green is a village about 16 miles to the east of Gatwick 's runway, at the apex and start of the final approach/descent for most planes landing at Gatwick from the east. Planes should be at around 5,000 ft altitude when passing over our village, but a large percentage are much lower. The vast majority of planes landing at Gatwick (from the east) pass over our village and because of the prevailing wind from the west that adds up to some 70% of all Gatwick landings. Consequently the disturbance to Langton residents' quality of life can be severe and we naturally have a considerable interest in your proposals.

The Langton Green Village Trust's mission is to promote and safeguard the best interests of the majority of village residents and as such this letter represents the views of the great majority of our villagers.

Langton Green has approximately 1,170 households with 2,500 residents, all of whom are affected by aviation traffic. Langton residents are not "anti aviation" but are strongly opposed to speculative, environmentally damaging, intrusive and possibly unnecessary expansion of aviation that serves no clearly identified national need. We feel that Gatwick's proposals should be so described.

The residents of Langton Green are consequently most strongly opposed to Gatwick's proposal to build a second runway and our detailed objections are as follows:

1. Environmental impact.

- a. The government's commitment to Net Zero by 2050 almost certainly cannot be met without reductions in flight numbers below 2019 pre-pandemic levels
- b. Gatwick's proposals would mean passenger flight numbers increasing from 42 M to 78M passenger flights a year. An extra 36M passenger flights a year.
- c. Where 70%+ passengers are not from south of London and have to travel considerable distance to the airport.
- d. Creating significant additional "airport travel" pollution
- e. Whilst creating an extra 1,000,000 tons of "runway 2" aviation generated CO2 annually.
- f. And the building of 45,000 additional car parking spaces to support the travellers
- g. Whilst road connections are limited and would not be sufficient for numbers envisaged, and likewise rail connections.

Langton Village believes that a second runway at Gatwick would be an environmental disaster and in total conflict with the government's commitment to Net Zero targets and an embarrassment to the PM's COP26 position and goals.

2. Gatwick's claims on pollution reduction.

- a. Gatwick claim that they can meet Net Zero targets through technological improvements. Gatwick quote electric motors for planes and alternative fuel as both helping the net zero drive. We believe these claims are spurious and will not deliver the emission reductions needed, for the following reasons.
 - i. Electric motors for planes. The subject was recently discussed on the BBC, where a representative from Rolls Royce presented current status. The gentleman said confidently that whilst he could see small passenger planes of around 20 passenger capacity being used for short hop intercity journeys he was confident that they would not solve the power/weight issues needed to be overcome for larger volume/longer distance electrically powered flights.
 - ii. Likewise, his views on the use of alternative fuels such as hydrogen was that whilst the ideas were exciting, commercial volume realisation of such solutions were so far below the horizon as to have no value in any emission reduction calculations
 - iii. **In short, Gatwick's emission reduction strategy may be built on sand.**

3. National need?

- a. Gatwick is proposing an overall increase in flight and passenger numbers when current thinking is that overall flight numbers must be curtailed or reduced and where individuals will fly less. Gatwick's proposals are in direct conflict with this direction.
- b. Heathrow has already received provisional signoff for the building of a 3rd runway, which if allowed to progress would more than cater for any national need for flights to new destinations.
- c. If additional services are introduced they are likely to be for business travellers who would need inter-service connectivity. As the majority of long haul business flights are already based in Heathrow, Gatwick does not meet the connectivity requirement well.
- d. Travel between Gatwick and Heathrow is slow. Not suitable for many business travellers. Alternatives, such as building a bespoke monorail connection would almost certainly never get off the ground
- e. Stansted, Southend and Luton all have expansion capacity within their existing runway configurations. Expansion at these airports – if nationally needed – would meet the UK Government's desire to see "best use" made of existing runways
- f. **In summary, because of changing pressures, there is almost certainly no national need or justification for a 2nd runway to be built at Gatwick. To us, Gatwick's**

proposals seem to be a conflict between National need and corporate greed aimed at maximising Gatwick's share value.

4. Gatwick's "2nd runway"

- a. Gatwick's current social media advertising and promotion campaign presents the case for being able to "use their 2nd runway".
- b. Gatwick **does NOT have a 2nd runway**. There is an emergency runway that does not meet CAA safety rules and cannot be used in its present state as a normal runway. To obtain a second runway, Gatwick would have to build a new runway 12 meters to the north of the emergency runway and build it longer than the current emergency runway as well.
- c. **Gatwick's claim of just changing use of their existing 2nd runway is a false claim. Gatwick do not currently have a 2nd runway.**

5. District impact.

- a. 70%+ of all passengers using a 2nd runway would travel from London or further afield.
- b. Road communications from London are poor. Purley is a bottleneck with no obvious solution. North of Purley is a crawl.
- c. Rail connections would need to be improved considerably to handle such a vast increase in passenger numbers. Current rail infrastructure will make that very difficult to achieve
- d. Multiple hectares would need to be allocated for some 45,000 extra car parking spaces.
- e. An extra (?) 13,000 homes with supporting services would need to be built and provided to accommodate the expected 18,000 additional workers and families the 2nd runway would generate.
- f. All of which activities would also generate a large amount of additional pollution – in addition to the 1,000,000 tons of CO₂ generated annually by runway 2's extra flights
- g. **In summary, Gatwick's proposals would have both a negative physical and environmental impact of the district which would conflict with government environmental targets.**

6. Local impact.

- a. As previously stated, Langton residents are not anti-aviation but the vast majority have come to accept that air travel will need to be limited in the future for environmental reasons.
- b. Pre covid, Langton residents were already paying a heavy price for Gatwick's arrogant change in its management of landings from the east; concentration of flights onto the final approach over our village. Many at a much lower height than the target 5000 ft. Sometimes up to a plane every 90 seconds – or more frequently. Night flights with few limits in numbers. Sleep deprivation. Delayed daytime overfills well past 2300. . Impact on air quality.
- c. A second runway would simply funnel a lot more planes over Langton, making a bad environment a terrible environment.

- d. A furore was created when Gatwick unilaterally altered approach path management a few years ago. As a result a Noise Management Board was established and this Board was supposed to be a forum where community noise concerns could be aired and hopefully resolutions found. The first Board became perceived as a “tool” for the aviation industry and the communities lost faith in it. The first NMB was disbanded and a second version of the NMB established. Again, this seems to serve the interests of the aviation industry and communities have lost faith in the NMB’s effectiveness as a forum where noise problems can be addressed in an equitable manner. Gatwick obviously do not want reasonable community solutions.
- e. **In summary, the impacts on our local community are already severe and attempts to mitigate the worst effects of Gatwick aviation have proved useless. Communities simply do not trust Gatwick as a good neighbour. A 2nd runway would simply make a bad situation terrible.**

7. Trust in Gatwick’s willingness to address communities’ concerns fairly.

- a. Gatwick has demonstrated a lack of unwillingness to address reasonable community needs in an open and positive manner – so much so that NBM1 failed and was disbanded and NMB2 is being shunned by a number of larger community bodies.

SUMMARY.

Langton Green Village Trust has no confidence in Gatwick’s willingness to address reasonable community concerns about the negative impact of existing aviation related issues. Our concerns would simply be magnified disastrously should Gatwick be allowed to build a 2nd runway.

Langton Green Village Trust and our community strongly oppose Gatwick’s proposal to build a 2nd runway for seven reasons:

- 1. Environmental and Global Warming.**
- 2. Gatwick’s dubious claims about possible technological improvements.**
- 3. Lack of National need.**
- 4. Gatwick’s spurious claim that they already have a 2nd runway.**
- 5. The wider district impact.**
- 6. Local impact.**
- 7. Lack of trust in Gatwick’s willingness to be a good neighbour.**

Jeremy Stirling

Committee member

Langton Green Village Trust

15th October 2021.