Introduction

The Government is in the process of preparing an air transport strategy for the UK to cover the long-term future of aviation and airports for the next 30 years.

Last year it published a series of consultation documents seeking views on a range of options for providing additional airport capacity to help meet the growing demand for air travel. Following a legal challenge, it has now extended its consultation to include options for growth at Gatwick Airport.

Gatwick is currently the second largest airport in the country. Its future development will have a major impact on the character of Crawley for many years to come. At the Borough Council, we believe it is vital that local people have the opportunity to assess the options being put forward by the Government and to make their views known.

The Government will be holding two exhibitions in the local area in May and the Borough Council has arranged 10 further exhibitions at five locations around the Borough to widen the opportunity for you to find out more.

In addition, we have prepared this leaflet to give you a summary of the options for Gatwick and an indication of some of the key issues raised by the consultation. The issues are not straightforward and have national as well as local implications, in terms of the environment, the economy and, indeed, society as a whole. For most local people, Gatwick will be the focus of attention. What happens elsewhere, however, will have an impact on the future of Gatwick.

Details of how to obtain a copy of the consultation documents and how to respond directly to the Government are set out at the back of the leaflet, together with information about the exhibitions which are being held.

The Borough Council will also be responding to the consultation. We will look at the options long and hard before coming to a conclusion, but it is vital that our response takes note of the views of our residents, local environment groups, the business community and others.

You can help us by completing the short questionnaire at the end of this leaflet. Please take the time to fill it in and post it by Friday 16 May to our independent research company.

Thank you for your help.

Cllr Doug Murdoch
Executive Member for Planning and Economic Development
How much airport capacity should be provided in the South East?

In 2002 approximately 180 million passengers used UK airports with around 114 million passengers passing through one of the four main London airports - Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton. The Government estimates that, by 2020, if there is no constraint on the demand for air travel, (for example by increasing the cost of air travel or by not providing additional airport capacity), these figures will grow to around 500 million passengers per annum (mppa) using UK airports and around 300 mppa using London airports.

The Government's consultation document explains the benefits of aviation to the UK and sets out arguments for meeting demand for air travel in the South East – the large economic benefits, the creation of new jobs, the advantages of being able to fly cheaply from your preferred airport, the maintenance of the UK's competitive position in the world, and the benefits of being able to fly to many different places.

The consultation document also identifies the environmental costs of aviation – the costs to society of aircraft noise, local air quality, landscape, biodiversity and heritage, as well as the global issue of climate change.

Addressing the contribution of aviation to global warming (for example through a tax on carbon dioxide emissions) could, the Government considers, reduce demand for air travel by around 10%. The other environmental costs tend to be experienced at a more local level and the document sets out how key impacts such as noise and local air quality might be managed to provide a balance between the operation of airports and the lives of those who live around them.

The Government's priorities are:

- To control and reduce the scale of environmental impact
- To take mitigation measures against remaining impacts
- To provide compensation where impacts still remain.

How should any new airport capacity be provided?

The Government sees two key issues on new airport capacity in the south east:

- Whether the UK needs one or more 'hub airports'
- Whether Heathrow should be developed further.

Hub Airports (large airports with the ability to provide a high level of interconnection between flights) are seen as providing significant benefits to both business and leisure travellers with potential for a greater number of destinations and higher frequency flights.

Heathrow already has two runways, but would need a third runway in order to maximise its potential as a hub. The environmental impacts of this are, however, considerable.

The consultation document also explores the possibility of expansion at another airport to play a major role as a hub – a new purpose built airport at Cliffe, expansion of Stansted or expansion of Gatwick. In the case of Gatwick, the consultation document suggests that with two new runways it could play a major role as a hub airport.

In addition to options which concentrate new capacity and the associated environmental and economic impacts at one or two hubs, the consultation document puts forward a range of options which provide for a more dispersed pattern of growth with two or more airports sharing the growth in runway capacity. For Gatwick this could mean one new runway, combined with new runways at Heathrow and/or Stansted.

Where should any new runway capacity be provided?

The consultation document also explores the possibility of expansion at another airport to play a major role as a hub – a new purpose built airport at Cliffe, expansion of Stansted or expansion of Gatwick. In the case of Gatwick, the consultation document suggests that with two new runways it could play a major role as a hub airport.

In addition to options which concentrate new capacity and the associated environmental and economic impacts at one or two hubs, the consultation document puts forward a range of options which provide for a more dispersed pattern of growth with two or more airports sharing the growth in runway capacity. For Gatwick this could mean one new runway, combined with new runways at Heathrow and/or Stansted.
The document analyses the impacts which each option would have on the surrounding area. None of the options is without environmental and economic implications although the extent and nature of the impact varies for each.

The information below and the impacts suggested for Gatwick Airport are drawn from the Department for Transport's consultation document.

For Gatwick Airport four options are put forward:

- Maximum use of the current runway
- A close parallel runway: see Map 1
- A wide-spaced runway: see Map 2
- Two new runways: see Map 3 (page 8)

The table (above) summarises the capacity of Gatwick Airport with and without new runways and Government forecasts of air traffic in 2030.

The options include the possibility of an additional runway being open by 2011. This would be before the expiry of a legal agreement between the operator of the airport (BAA) and West Sussex County Council. This agreement was signed in 1979 and prevents any additional runways before 2019. To enable a runway to be built before 2019, the agreement would have to be overturned either by the agreement of the two parties or by the Government through legislation.

### Maximum Use of the Current Runway

With no new runway or new terminal but with larger planes and more off-peak flights, the theoretical capacity of the airport might increase to 46.5 million passengers a year. The options which exclude Gatwick Airport from new runway development, however, predict a slightly more modest range of passengers – between 38 million passengers a year to 42 million passengers a year by 2030.

In terms of immediate environmental impact, this development would result in:

- The development of the airport required to achieve maximum use of the single runway can be accommodated within the existing airport boundary without loss of property or agricultural land
- New environmental legislation and improvements in technology are likely to result in significant reductions in the area affected by noise and the number of passengers
properties affected by air pollution by 2030.

In terms of new urban development it would mean:
- No additional housing requirement beyond that already planned for in Regional Planning Guidance.

In terms of the local economy it would mean:
- Airport related employment will decline from 43,000 jobs in 1998 to 38,000 in 2015 and 33,000 in 2030 as a result of productivity improvements and transfer of services to airports where new runway capacity is provided.

Close Parallel Runway

A close parallel runway would enable the airport to grow to around 66 million passengers per annum, approximately the same number as Heathrow handles now. It involves building a new runway quite close to the existing runway so that one can be used for landing while the other is used for take-offs.

In terms of its immediate environmental impact, the development would result in:

**Land/Heritage**
- Compulsory purchase of 50 residential properties

**Air Quality**
- 3,800 residents exposed to nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels exceeding EU limits by 2030. (NB The Department for Transport [DfT] has indicated that the number of residents affected by excessive levels of NO₂ could be significantly reduced by technological improvements to aircraft engines, restrictions on road traffic and agreements to fully fund the purchase of affected properties).

**Noise**

Map 4 shows the areas predicted to be affected by aircraft noise in excess of 57 decibels (dBA) which is considered to be the level at which community disturbance starts to occur.

In terms of new surface transport provision it would mean:

**Rail**
- Enhancements to track, signalling and Gatwick station to allow more trains at peak times
- Possible work to improve capacity for airport-related passengers elsewhere along the London-Brighton line.
Road
• Local road closures and widening of M23 airport spur and A23 access road to airport
• Diversion of the A23 to south of airport.

In terms of new urban development it would mean:
• An additional 3,000 houses would be needed within the south London to south coasts area beyond that already planned for, with the likelihood of some Green Belt land used for new housing within the Crawley/Gatwick area.

In terms of the local economy it would mean:
• An additional 8,000 airport-related jobs by 2030 based on the assumption that the runway was built by 2011, fewer if it was built later.

Wide-spaced runway
A wide spaced runway to the south of the airport would take the capacity to 83 million passengers per annum, approximately one third more than Heathrow as it is now. This would allow for two runways, both used for take-off and landing.

In terms of its immediate environmental impact it would mean:

Land/heritage
• Compulsory purchase of 300 residential properties
• Loss of countryside including:
  - 200 hectares of high grade agricultural land
  - reduction of Green Belt by 240 hectares
• Loss of 5 Grade II* and 12 Grade II listed buildings

Air Quality
• 3,800 residents exposed to NO₂ levels exceeding EU limits by 2030

Noise
Map 5 shows the areas predicted to be affected by aircraft noise in excess of 57 decibels (dBA) which is considered to be the level at which community disturbance starts to occur.

In terms of new surface transport provision it would mean:

Rail
• Additional trains to encourage airport users away from peak services
• Improve rail infrastructure between Coulsdon and Selhurst/Norwood J unction
• Possible tunnelled underpass at East Croydon
Road
- Increased capacity at London terminals
- Local road closures and widening of M23 airport spur and A23 access road to airport
- Divert A23 to south of airport and place in tunnel.

In terms of urban development it would mean:
- An additional 9,000 houses needed within the south London to south coast area beyond that already planned for, with the likelihood of some significant Green Belt land used for new housing within the Crawley/Gatwick area.

In terms of the economy it would mean:
- An additional 21,000 airport-related jobs by 2030 assuming that the first runway was built in 2011 and the second runway in 2021.

Land/heritage
- Compulsory purchase of 430 residential properties
- Loss of countryside including:
  - 260 hectares of high grade agricultural land
  - reduction of Green Belt by 530 hectares
- Loss of 12 Grade II* and 18 Grade II listed buildings
- Impact on several sites including 3 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest and the Glovers Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Loss of a part of the Conservation Area at Charlwood Village.

Air Quality
- 7,000 residents exposed to NO₂ levels exceeding EU limits by 2030

Noise
Map 6 (page 10) shows the areas predicted to be affected by aircraft noise in excess of 57 decibels (dBA) which is considered to be the level at which community disturbance starts to occur.

In terms of new surface transport provision it would mean:
Surface transport

Rail
- Additional trains to encourage airport users away from peak services
- Improve rail infrastructure between Coulsdon and Selhurst/ Norwood Junction
- Possible tunnelled underpass at East Croydon
- Increased capacity at London terminals

Road
- Local road closures and widening of M23 airport spur and A23 access road to airport
- Divert A23 to south of airport and place in tunnel
- Widening of M23 between junctions 8 and 10.

In terms of urban development it would mean:
- An additional 21,000 houses beyond those already planned for needed between south London and the south coast. ... by locating suitable businesses in areas such as Brighton, within the designated Priority Area for Economic Regeneration.

In terms of the economy it would mean:
- An additional 49,000 airport-related jobs by 2030 assuming that the first runway was built in 2011 and the second runway in 2021.

Summary
The issues around the Government’s options for Gatwick Airport are highly complex.

The environmental impacts vary from option to option. Without any additional runways, some of the environmental impacts will be less than today – for example with technological advances air noise should decrease. As suggested capacity increases, so do the impacts.

The economic impacts also vary. Gatwick will not stay the same even if it is decided that it should have no additional runway. After it reaches its capacity, employment numbers will start to fall and its role in the local and regional economy will change.