

## TOPIC PAPER 9: Gatwick

*The way that the whole town develops in the future will be affected by planning decisions. Crawley Borough Council has started work on a new local plan that will help to guide development in Crawley over 15 years from 2014-2029.*

*This consultation period forms part of the early engagement, and further consultation stages are planned before the document is adopted in 2014. Comments received to earlier consultation periods, including to the Topic Papers in 2009, the Town Centre North Supplementary Planning Document and the Manor Royal Masterplan, will continue to be taken into consideration, alongside the technical evidence base, when formulating the Local Plan Preferred Strategy. The Preferred Strategy will be made available for a further period of consultation later in 2012.*

*This is your opportunity to shape the way the town develops and the council would appreciate and value any comments you have on this Topic Paper or any of the others that form part of this consultation.*

### Consultation Questions:

- G1. How should the Local Plan address growth of the airport to between 40 and 45 mppa as a single-runway two-terminal airport?
- G2. What are your views on what the Borough Council's position should be with regards to the potential for the future development of a second runway at Gatwick in the very long term?
- G3. Should the restriction of office space at the airport to airport related use be retained?
- G4. Should there be specific policies in relation to airport related car parking?

### Summary of Current Context:

The government is currently in the process of revising national aviation policy. In 2011 it published a scoping paper on "Developing a Sustainable Framework for UK Aviation". The government plans to publish a draft of the new UK Aviation Framework in 2012. It should also be noted that the Coalition issued a statement in 2010 which stated that it would not permit a second runway at Gatwick.

Nevertheless until the new UK Aviation Framework is in place, the 2003 Aviation White Paper is still a relevant consideration. The 2003 White Paper outlined the possibility of a wide spaced parallel second runway at Gatwick in case the conditions at Heathrow could not be met. In addition, the White Paper also states that since there is a strong case on its own merits for a new wide-spaced runway at Gatwick after 2019 that land should be safeguarded for this.

The adopted Core Strategy supports development at Gatwick which is related to the operation of the airport as a two terminal, one runway airport subject to the need for satisfactory environmental safeguards. It also safeguards the land necessary for a second wide spaced runway as required by the 2003 White Paper.

The safeguarded area shown on the current Core Strategy proposals map reflects that shown in the 2006 Interim Gatwick Airport Master Plan. Gatwick Airport Limited consulted on a revised draft Master Plan at the end of 2011. however, the Master Plan continues to show the same area to be safeguarded for a second runway.

Gatwick Airport generates a significant number of economic benefits both directly through its own employment requirements but also through the wider benefits to the regional and local economy which make Crawley and the wider Gatwick Diamond area attractive to employers and businesses.

All local policy documents including a Supplementary Planning Document are based on the growth of the airport to support a through-put of 40 million passengers per annum (mppa). A Section 106 planning agreement which contains obligations relating to the environmental impact of the growth and operation of the airport is also based on 40mppa. Currently, through-put is around 32 million passengers per annum and it is predicted that this will increase to reach 40 million passengers per annum in 2020.

The 1979 legal agreement between West Sussex County Council and Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) prevents the building of a second runway at Gatwick before 2019.

### **Key Issues:**

#### **Development of the Airport with a Single Runway**

- The Local Plan will need to continue to reflect the development required to support the agreed development of the airport up to 40 mppa as a two terminal one runway airport.
- It is currently predicted that a through-put of 40 mppa will be reached in 2020. The way in which the Local Plan deals with the potential for growth beyond this level needs consideration, as theoretically Gatwick as a two terminal one runway airport can cater for up to 45 mppa. The latest passenger demand forecasts issued by the government in August 2011 predict that the through-put at Gatwick will reach this level by 2030. In particular the environmental implications of a through-put of this number of passengers will need to be assessed as well as the economic and social benefits.

#### **Future Runway Development and Need for Safeguarding**

- In its policy statement in 2010 the Coalition government stated that it would refuse permission for a second runway at Gatwick. However, until the 2003 Aviation White Paper is replaced it is considered that its requirements remain current. The draft of the new UK Aviation Framework will be issued in 2012 before the publication of the Preferred Strategy of the Local Plan and will be a key consideration in terms of future runway development.
- It is hoped that the UK Aviation Framework will provide clear guidance with regards to the need to safeguard land for a second runway. The Borough Council highlighted this issue in its response to the Scoping Document which has preceded the preparation of the Aviation Framework itself. It is felt that there needs to be discussion, if it is concluded that a second runway at Gatwick is not currently required, about whether it may be prudent to safeguard land on a very long term basis to retain it as a future option even if it is not needed now.
- The draft Gatwick Master Plan prepared by GAL in 2011 which covers the period to 2020 refers to the requirements of the 2003 Aviation White Paper and the preparation of the new UK Framework on Aviation. As a result it continues to show an area of land to be safeguarded for a wide spaced runway. It is also stated that it is believed that there is a possibility that a second runway may be needed sometime in the future.

- The Borough Council's response to consultation on the 2003 Aviation White Paper indicated that it was not in support of the development of a second runway at Gatwick due to the environmental implications.

#### **Employment Uses at Gatwick**

- Recent years have seen an increasing level of vacant office property at the airport, due in part to the changing needs of airlines and airport businesses which require less office space.
- Saved Local Plan Policies (GAT4 and GD4) and Core Strategy Policy G1 have supported a number of conditions which have been placed on office developments at the airport to restrict them to airport-related uses. Airport related uses are those which contribute to the safe and efficient operation of the airport such as airlines, handling agents and the airport operator, who are involved in the direct provision of services relating to the operation of the airport.
- The Borough Council has recently allowed the temporary relaxation of condition for a period of three years on some office developments at the airport.
- If non-airport related uses were to occupy airport floorspace on a permanent basis, then this could prejudice the ability of the airport to provide for increased demand by airport related uses should this be necessary in the future. Furthermore, the impact of such uses on other employment areas in the town also needs to be understood and taken into account.

#### **Long Term Gatwick Related Car Parking**

- There has been a strong policy approach (Saved Local Plan Policy GAT8, GAT9 and GAT10), supported by policies of the other local authorities surrounding Gatwick Airport, requiring any necessary increases in long-stay parking to be provided within the airport boundary. Gatwick Airport Limited has produced a Car Parking Strategy which indicates that an additional 7,500 spaces is required to satisfy car parking demand as the airport grows to 40 mppa. The strategy highlights how these spaces could be provided within the airport boundary through a combination of decking and small extensions to existing car parks.
- Although there are a number of established businesses with planning consent which provide long-stay Gatwick related parking in off-airport locations, the Borough Council has had to take enforcement action against other businesses operating without planning consent, or consider planning applications for long stay parking outside of the airport boundary. Previously it was felt that unauthorised sites were likely to occur in the countryside. However, there have recently been instances of vacant sites within employment areas being used. As a result the need for planning policies to address such uses in these areas needs to be considered.

#### **Options:**

##### **Future Development at Gatwick**

- The Local Plan should continue to contain policies which support growth of the airport as a single-runway, two-terminal airport with a passenger through-put of 40 mppa.
- The Local Plan should establish a policy basis for growth to 45 mppa which could be possible after 2018 as a single-runway two-terminal airport subject to no significant environmental impact and appropriate environmental safeguards. The environmental impact could be assessed at a later date as evidence now will not

reflect technological changes over the next nine or more years.

- The Local Plan should continue to safeguard land for a second runway; and could contain policies on the development of a second runway or reference could be made to the preparation of a revised Supplementary Planning Document or Area Action Plan at a later date which would address the issues in relation to growth beyond 2018/19 within the framework of the anticipated government National Policy Statement on Aviation.

#### **Employment Uses at Gatwick**

- Retain the policy basis for the use of conditions and continue to restrict the use of office space to airport related uses.
- Allow the temporary relaxation of the conditions.
- Permit the removal of the conditions to enable use by non-airport related uses.

#### **Long Term Gatwick Related Parking**

- Retain the five saved Local Plan policies relating to Airport Related Parking.
- Consolidate the saved Local Plan 2000 policies into a single new Local Plan 2014-2029 policy.
- Rely on the Gatwick Supplementary Planning Document and Car Parking Strategy.

#### **Indication of Potential Direction:**

- Crawley Borough Council will continue to support the growth of Gatwick up to 40 mppa as a two-terminal, one-runway airport.
- The Borough Council would need to assess the environmental implication of the development at Gatwick needed to support a passenger through-put of between 40 and 45 mppa as a one-runway, two-terminal airport. However, this would be difficult to assess at the present time.
- There is currently uncertainty about the need to safeguard for a second runway given the current stage in the preparation of the UK Aviation Framework. It is likely that the council will need to consider its position in relation to a second runway in order to formulate its response to the draft Framework document.
- The main function of Gatwick is as an international airport and it needs to be able to support the airport related uses necessary to enable its safe and efficient operation. It is considered that development, including non-airport related employment, which could prejudice this objective should not be allowed and therefore appropriate policies are required.
- A policy supporting the provision of additional long term parking within the airport boundary should be included within the Local Plan. There should also be policies which address the potential for sites in the countryside and existing employment areas.

#### **Evidence Base:**

##### **Regional**

- The South East Plan supports the development of Gatwick Airport and requires land to be safeguarded at Gatwick for a possible new runway after 2019. Gatwick

also lies at the heart of the Crawley/Gatwick sub region and makes a significant contribution to the economy of the area.

#### **Local**

- The adopted Core Strategy contains policies relating to Gatwick which support development related to the operation of the airport as a two-terminal, one-runway airport subject to the need for satisfactory environmental safeguards. The adopted Core Strategy also safeguards the land necessary for a second wide spaced runway.
- There are eight saved Local Plan 2000 policies in relation to Gatwick, five of which relate to car parking.
- The adopted Core Strategy policies are expanded upon in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Development at Gatwick Airport adopted in December 2008.
- The SPD also reflects the content of the Legal Agreement that was signed in December 2008 between Crawley Borough Council, West Sussex County Council and Gatwick Airport Limited, which sets out a range of obligations to help ensure that the operation, growth and environmental impacts of the airport are managed and enable the sustainable growth of the airport.
- In 2006 Gatwick Airport Limited produced an Interim Master Plan for the Airport which sets out issues surrounding the character and growth of the airport and airport operator, and alternative scenarios for development of the airport in 2015 and 2030.
- Draft Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2011
- Scoping Document – Developing a Sustainable Framework for UK Aviation
- 2003 Aviation White Paper