

# Topic Paper 1

## Future of Gatwick Airport & Implications for the Local Plan

for the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030

November 2014



## Topic Paper 1: Future of Gatwick Airport and Implications for the Local Plan

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This topic paper considers the potential implications for the Local Plan of the various scenarios relating to the outcome of a decision related to a second runway at Gatwick. It expands upon paragraphs 1.38 – 1.43 of the submission Local Plan<sup>1</sup>. It is prepared in light of the currently unknown outcome of the national investigations into runway capacity in the south east and submission Local Plan policies:
  - GAT1: Development of the Airport with a Single Runway
  - GAT2: Safeguarded Land
- 1.2. The Local Plan has been prepared on the basis of the existing single runway, two terminal configuration of Gatwick Airport.
- 1.3. As such the Plan supports the growth of the airport to a throughput of 45 million passengers per annum within this current configuration. It also safeguards land for a wide spaced second runway, should it be required. This position affects both policies relating to development at the airport itself but also the allocations in the Local Plan and restrictions on development in the safeguarded area.
- 1.4. The Plan has been prepared at the same time that aviation policy continues to be the subject of detailed debate and consideration at a national level. Initially this was through the preparation of the Aviation Policy Framework and more latterly through the work of the Airports Commission chaired by Sir Howard Davies. Currently, the provision of a second runway at Gatwick remains a possibility as it is included in the Airports Commission's shortlist. Irrespective of what the final decision is in relation to a second runway at Gatwick, there will be implications for the Local Plan and therefore a need to review its policies and allocations.
- 1.5. This topic paper should be read in conjunction with the following published documents:
  - Gatwick Airport Masterplan (Gatwick Airport Limited, July 2012): LP125
  - National Aviation Policy Framework (DfT, March 2013): LP122
  - Airports Commission Interim Report (Airports Commission, December 2013): LP126
  - Gatwick Consultation – A Second Runway for Gatwick, Our April 2014 Runway Options Consultation (Gatwick Airport, April 2014): LP127
  - Airports Commission Consultation Document: Gatwick Airport Second Runway, Heathrow Airport Extended Northern Runway, Heathrow Airport North West Runway (Airports Commission, November 2014): LP128a
  - Gatwick Airport Second Runway: Business Case and Sustainability Assessment (Airports Commission, November 2014): LP128b.

## 2.0 Background to Local Plan Policies Relating to Gatwick

### Existing Legislative & Policy Position

- 2.1. The 2003 Airports White Paper<sup>2</sup> first required land to be safeguarded for a second runway at Gatwick in the event that an additional runway could not be provided elsewhere. As a result the 2008 Core Strategy<sup>3</sup> identified on the Proposals Map an area of land to be safeguarded for a second runway at Gatwick. This area was based on the 2006 Airport Master Plan prepared by Gatwick Airport Limited. A policy in the Core Strategy prevented

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<sup>1</sup> Crawley 2030: The Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 – 2030 Submission Consultation Draft (CBC, September 2014) Core Document Library Reference: LP001

<sup>2</sup> The Future of Air Transport (Department for Transport, December 2003) Core Document Library Reference: LP121

<sup>3</sup> Crawley Borough Council Core Strategy (Crawley Borough Council, October 2008) Core Document Library Reference: LP034

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any development in the safeguarded area which would be incompatible with the development of a second runway.

- 2.2. The land that has been safeguarded is based on the land originally shown in the Interim Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2006 as being required for a second wide spaced runway and its associated terminal and ancillary facilities. This has subsequently been reproduced in the Gatwick Airport Master Plan July 2012<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.3. The Aviation Policy Framework<sup>5</sup> published in March 2013 superseded the 2003 White Paper and restated the need to continue protecting land safeguarded for additional runways from incompatible development whilst awaiting the outcome of the government's consideration of the need for additional airports capacity which was being carried out by the Airports Commission.

### Review of UK Aviation Capacity & Growth

- 2.4. The Airports Commission, established by the government in September 2012, was asked to consider whether there was a need for additional airport capacity in the UK and if so to make recommendations on how this capacity could be provided. The programme for the Airports Commission was to publish an interim report by December 2013 and a final report in 2015.
- 2.5. Submissions of options for providing additional airport capacity were required to be submitted to the Commission in July 2013. Gatwick Airport submitted three different options for a second runway. The three options for a close spaced, medium spaced and wide spaced second way were all located to the south of existing runway.
- 2.6. Crawley Borough Council debated Gatwick Airport Limited's proposals for a second runway at Gatwick at a special meeting of the Full Council on 26 September 2013. The council determined not to express a view on a second runway at Gatwick Airport at this time until more information, especially on environmental impacts, was available as part of the next stage of the work of the Airports Commission. It was felt that as the scale of the impact of a second runway was not fully understood, this wider information was necessary to enable the environmental implications to be fully considered alongside the economic benefits.
- 2.7. These comments were sent to the Airports Commission as part of the borough council's response to the airport operators' submissions regarding additional airport capacity which had been submitted to the Commission in July 2013. The council also emphasised in its comments to the Commission the need for clarity on the issue of runway safeguarding in the event that it is determined at any point in the process that a second runway at Gatwick is not required.
- 2.8. The Airports Commission's interim report<sup>6</sup> published on 17 December 2013 concluded that there is a clear case for one net additional runway in London and the South East by 2030 (and a potential further runway by 2050). A wide spaced second runway at Gatwick, along with two proposals for additional runway capacity at Heathrow, was shortlisted for further analysis and assessment.
- 2.9. The promoters of the shortlisted schemes were required to develop more detailed proposals for the shortlisted options. Gatwick Airport Limited submitted a document to the Airports Commission on 14 May 2014. This was supplemented with more information in July following the consultation that they carried out in April/May 2014. The Airports Commission commenced its own consultation in the autumn of 2014 on all of the

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<sup>4</sup> Gatwick Master Plan (Gatwick Airport Limited, July 2012) Core Document Library Reference: LP125

<sup>5</sup> Aviation Policy Framework (Department for Transport, March 2013) Core Document Library Reference: LP122

<sup>6</sup> Airports Commission: Interim Report (Airports Commission, December 2013) Core Document Library Reference: LP126

shortlisted options and its assessments of their impacts<sup>7</sup>. The consultation period will end on 3 February 2015.

- 2.10. Given that the final report by the Airports Commission is not expected until the summer of 2015 and that the interim report has confirmed that a second runway at Gatwick remains an option, with the wide spaced runway the shortlisted option, the Local Plan has continued to safeguard land for a wide spaced second runway at Gatwick.
- 2.11. Gatwick undertook more detailed work in preparing for the submission to the Commission in May, and as part of their consultation on second runway options in April and May 2014. The options for a wide spaced runway showed some minor changes to the land anticipated to be required, including a possible western extension of the airport boundary beyond that currently safeguarded due to changes in the way aircraft taxi between runways. However, as these plans are likely to be still subject to further design work and assessment it is considered appropriate to continue to safeguard the land that is shown as required for a second runway in the Gatwick Airport Master Plan July 2012.

### **3.0 Reviewing the Local Plan Following a Decision on the Future of Gatwick**

- 3.1. The Local Plan has been prepared on the basis of the current single runway, two terminal configuration of Gatwick Airport, with land safeguarded for potential additional runway development, as required by the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework. The borough council is aware that the findings of the Airport Commission final report in 2015 and any subsequent government decision on runway capacity could result in one of the following scenarios for Gatwick Airport and the borough:
  - a second runway at Gatwick
  - no second runway at Gatwick and safeguarding is lifted;
  - no second runway and safeguarding continues.
- 3.2. Each of these anticipated scenarios would result in implications for the Local Plan and the extent to which its policies and allocations need to be reviewed. These are explored in more detailed below.

#### **Timing of a Review**

- 3.3. As has been outlined above, the Airports Commission is due to publish its final report in the summer of 2015, setting out its recommendations with regards to the optimum approach for meeting future airport capacity in the UK. The Commission is also expected to publish materials to support the government in preparing a National Policy Statement to accelerate the resolution of any future planning applications. Ultimately, it will be the government's decision on where any additional runways are to be built.
- 3.4. Although it is hoped that the recommendations of the final Airports Commission report will provide a clear indication on the proposals for a second runway at Gatwick, it is considered that there will not be any certainty until the government has made a decision and this forms National Policy. The timing of this decision making is unknown but will affect the timing of any review of the Local Plan.

#### **A Second Runway at Gatwick**

- 3.5. If a second runway at Gatwick was supported by the government, any planning application would be determined by the Planning Inspectorate as it would be classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. The borough council would have the

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<sup>7</sup> Airports Commission Consultation Document: Gatwick Airport Second Runway, Heathrow Airport Extended Northern Runway, Heathrow Airport North West Runway (Airports Commission, November 2014): LP128a and Gatwick Airport Second Runway: Business Case and Sustainability Assessment (Airports Commission, November 2014): LP128b.  
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opportunity to submit a Local Impact Report giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the local authority area as well as submitting representations on the planning application.

- 3.6. Although the borough council will not determine any application, there are a number of implications in terms of the Local Plan. The borough council will need to:
- Review Policy G1 to ensure that it is still appropriate for determining any applications at the Airport that will be the borough council's responsibility following the construction of a second runway and its supporting facilities;
  - Revise the airport boundary on the Local Plan Map to reflect the new airport boundary;
  - Consider the implications of the relocation of any businesses that will be displaced as a result of the construction of the runway, terminal and supporting infrastructure;
  - Consider whether there are any further opportunities for employment development once the full extent of its layout and supporting infrastructure is known;
  - Consider the implications for the Economic Growth Assessment;
  - Fully assess the scale of any additional housing need, and consider the implications for Crawley and the surrounding area, taking into account the fact that any further residential housing in the northern part of the borough would be restricted due to unacceptable noise impacts. It should be noted that all housing allocations in the current Local Plan have taken into account the anticipated impact of noise arising from a wide space second runway;
  - Consider the infrastructure implications of a second runway and additional development, in conjunction with planned growth in the area;
  - Consider the implications for land use changes surrounding the new airport boundary.

### **No Second Runway and Lifting of Safeguarding**

- 3.7. In the event that the government, in its response to the Airports Commission report, determines that there is not to be a second runway at Gatwick, the borough council has highlighted on a number of occasions the need for there to be clear guidance on whether or not land for a second runway will continue to need to be safeguarded. This is because it is recognised that the land that is currently safeguarded has some potential for development if it is not needed for a second runway. The implications for the Local Plan are that:
- The safeguarding of the land for a second runway currently shown on the Local Plan Map would be removed and the policy on restricting development in the safeguarded area would no longer be appropriate.
  - Possible allocations for a variety of uses can be considered in the area that used to be safeguarded for a second runway:
    - The allocation of additional employment sites in the safeguarded area may be appropriate to meet the needs of the area. This is shown as an area of search for future employment land on the strategic diagram;
    - The majority of the land safeguarded for a second runway would not be appropriate for housing due to the impact of noise from the existing single runway. However, some additional sites for housing to extend the northern residential areas may become available and could contribute to meeting Crawley's housing need. These are shown as areas of search for future housing land.
  - The council will need to consider what development could take place at Gatwick within its one runway, two terminal configuration.

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- The council will need to consider the infrastructure implications of any development in this area.

### **No Second Runway, Requirement for Safeguarding Land**

- 3.8. It is possible that the government could decide that additional runway capacity should be built elsewhere, but provides clear guidance that land should continue to be safeguarded for any further consideration of airport expansion at some point in the longer term. Even in this event which is similar to the current position, it is felt that there will be a need to review some elements of the Local Plan:
- Review the boundary of the safeguarded land and consider whether any minor changes to the boundary need to be made;
  - Review the safeguarding policy to ensure that it is still appropriate and in line with the latest government guidance;
  - Taking into account any changes to the safeguarded area, consider the release of some land for minor expansions of the employment areas of the borough to the north which would otherwise be considered preferable to bring forward in a more comprehensive manner.