

**By email only**

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## **Gatwick Highway Improvements and Project Updates Consultation**

Thank you for consulting Sevenoaks District Council on Gatwick Airport Limited's updated plans which will inform the development consent order application for the commercial use of the Northern runway.

### **Background**

Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) is a predominantly rural local authority situated in West Kent. SDC has responded to numerous aviation-related consultations, in particular relating to noise issues from Gatwick Airport. A response to Gatwick Airport Limited's initial Northern runway consultation was submitted in December 2021. Please see appendix 1.

We have chosen to respond to the project updates most relevant to us as a local authority.

Please see our consultation response as below:

#### **1. Road improvements – design and mitigation**

In response to feedback on our road improvement plans, we revisited previous designs and considered new options to provide a better layout that still meets the needs of local non-airport and airport traffic and minimises potential environmental effects. We have created a more intuitive layout to ensure safety during construction and operation and to take account of travel to, from and between local communities.

#### **Q1**

What are your views on our updated road improvement proposals?

As indicated in our previously submitted response, it is considered that the road improvement proposals are localised and there will be a detrimental impact to the

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District from an increase of vehicles and passengers using our roads to access the airport. This is still our view in light of the amendments.

## 2. Car parking

In response to feedback from our Autumn 2021 Consultation, we have reviewed our approach to car parking in the context of our commitments to sustainable travel. We are now proposing fewer new on-airport car parking spaces to cater for growth and replace spaces lost due to Project works. We are also mindful of local planning policies requiring on-airport parking to help prevent additional, off-airport parking and its associated impacts on local communities.

### Q2

What are your views on our car parking proposals, including for additional on-airport spaces to assist with reducing existing off-airport unauthorised spaces?

SDC are cautiously encouraged that the number of car parking spaces to serve the airport has been reduced and it is noted that there will be a greater focus on public transport for passengers and staff. However, it does not appear there has been any significant additional information provided at this stage to detail what these proposals will entail. We take the opportunity to state that whilst it is encouraging there is less focus on car as being a mode of transport, the supporting measures to improve public transport will be vital to ensure they are feasible alternative modes of transport.

It is noted that an updated Airport Surface Access Strategy will be submitted for the DCO submission and this will include strategies such as an active travel strategy, bus and coach strategy. We are encouraged to see Sevenoaks listed as an area where regional coach services are being studied to potentially improve services to Gatwick. SDC launched our Movement Strategy in April 2022 which states our vision of low carbon and sustainable transport across the District. It covers our intentions to encourage active forms of travel like walking and cycling, using public transport and reducing car usage. We therefore would welcome public transport improvements to make non-car based journeys between the District and Gatwick more convenient. We also take the opportunity to highlight our support for the reinstatement of direct rail services between Tonbridge and Gatwick (via Edenbridge) to negate the need to travel by car and cause further strain on our strategic and local road network.

## 3. Project updates

Some of our proposals – including in relation to the airfield, hotels and offices, water management, carbon, noise and others - have evolved in response to feedback from the Autumn 2021 Consultation and due to further design, development, and environmental assessment work.

### Q3

What are your views on our Project updates? Please specify the topics to which your comments refer.

## Noise

SDC welcome the formation of the Noise Envelope Group to continue work on the proposals to set limits on air noise from future operations at Gatwick within the DCO. We have provided our views in relation to noise in our previous consultation response and are supportive of this being considered in the group's discussion to creating a defined, achievable, measureable and enforceable noise envelope. We take the opportunity to reiterate our support of a noise envelope to account for average noise contours at various dB levels. We also reiterate our stance that there should be a ban on flights within a set time period throughout the entire night time period (23:00 – 07:00) instead of just the night time quota period (23:30 – 06:00) to give residents reassurance of a duration of respite.

## **Carbon**

Our previous consultation response expressed concern for the projected increase of carbon emissions resulting from Gatwick's proposed expansion plans. SDC would welcome the draft Carbon Action Plan for details on Gatwick's proposed actions to reduce emissions once this has been completed for the DCO application.

Yours sincerely,  
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Infrastructure Delivery Officer