

REFERENCE NO: CR/2019/0448/CON

LOCATION: [GATWICK AIRPORT, NORTH OF MAIN RUNWAY, CRAWLEY](#)
WARD: Langley Green and Tushmore
PROPOSAL: CONSULTATION FROM GATWICK AIRPORT LIMITED FOR A RAPID EXIT TAXIWAY (RET) TO RUNWAY 26L

TARGET DECISION DATE: 12 August 2019

CASE OFFICER: Mrs J. McPherson

APPLICANTS NAME: Mr R Matthews

AGENTS NAME:

PLANS & DRAWINGS CONSIDERED:

2TER1-XX-E-001-GA-010291 , AGL Layout
2TER1-XX-C-046-SE-010007, Longitudinal Section
2TER1-XX-C-XXX-GA-XXXXXX, Site Plan
2TER1-XX-C-XXX-GA-XXXXXX, Location Plan
2TER1-XX-C-046-SE-010005, Typical Pavement Section
22059-XX-C-046-GA-010051, General Arrangement

CONSULTEE NOTIFICATIONS & RESPONSES:-

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|-----|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | GAL Planning Department | No comments received |
| 2. | GAL Aerodrome Safeguarding | No objection |
| 3. | National Air Traffic Services (NATS) | No safeguarding objection |
| 4. | Surrey County Council | No comments received |
| 5. | Mid Sussex District Council | No comments received |
| 6. | Mole Valley District Council | Accepted that the provision of the additional exit taxiway would result in an increase of traffic movements which would cause an increase of noise in Mole Valley. It is hoped the 11 more plane movements would be a maximum figure, rather than a target figure. The data on noise and air quality is noted. On balance, while the proposal may result in a very small noise increase, the RET would make one element of the airport safer and allow efficient use of the runway therefore - No objection. |
| 7. | East Sussex County Council | No comments to make |
| 8. | Horsham District Council | No comments to make on proposal |
| 9. | Tandridge District Council | No comments received |
| 10. | Reigate and Banstead Borough Council | No objection |
| 11. | WSCC Planning | No comments received |

NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS:-

None required. The consultation was advertised on the website and weekly planning list.

RESPONSES RECEIVED:-

Fourteen responses have been received, four raising objections and ten supporting the proposal. The comments are as follows:

Objections - (including a representation from CAGNE (Communities Against Gatwick Noise and Emissions) raising the following issues:

- Lack of infrastructure (Gatwick states that runway works will add up to 1,650 trips per day)
- M23 and railway line already congested
- Incremental changes are disingenuous at a time when Gatwick Masterplan is seeking up to 3 runways.
- Support idea of reducing 'go arounds' but not an increase in aircraft movements, which has major impact for people if located under a flight path.
- Gatwick state number of additional flights and noise is small, but Gatwick is already noisy.
- Noise data is not a true indication of noise levels.
- Noise contours have reduced but not for all, concentrated flight paths have increased impact on some residents.
- Air quality exceeds limits in Reigate and Banstead Borough and will further deteriorate with increased passenger numbers.
- Highway improvements detailed by Gatwick are connected to smart road for natural traffic growth not runway expansion.
- 12 years from disaster (according to David Attenborough) due to climate change, and aviation is one of the worst offenders (due to consumption of massive amounts of fossil fuel and atmospheric pollution).
- We need to reduce flying, not increase it, for the sake of the children, their futures and the planet.
- This is for profits for a foreign company.
- With climate change we have a moral responsibility to reduce air and road traffic, not increase it.

Support - (including a representation from Gatwick Diamond Business) raising the following issues:

- Will enhance Gatwick operations and improve on-time efficiencies and reduce number of 'go arounds'.
- Reduced 'go arounds' will benefit community with less noise and emissions.
- RET should make Gatwick more efficient.
- Gatwick is key centre for employment and investment is welcomed.
- Application would reduce noise levels and pollution but would rather see second runway built as current situation is 'beating around the bush' and not addressing the problem.
- Support plans for improved resilience and operational efficiency of airport.
- Welcome this measure to increase capacity as frustrated there is not a second runway.

REASON FOR REPORTING TO COMMITTEE:-

Number of representations received.

THE APPLICATION SITE:-

- 1.1 The development site is situated centrally within the airport between the main runway and the Juliet taxiway, and either side of the standby (northern) runway (which is used for most of the time as a taxiway). The development site is stated as being 2 hectares in area and is primarily a grassed area.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-

- 2.1 The proposed development is for the construction of an additional Rapid Exit Taxiway (RET) on Runway 26L (westerly operations) designed to accommodate aircraft up to code E size enabling them to:
- i) exit westwards onto the standby runway (taxiway);
 - ii) exit northward across the standby runway to Juliet taxiway; or
 - iii) exit eastwards onto the standby runway (taxiway).
- 2.2 The taxiway would comprise an area of hardstanding with standard airfield ground lighting running along it. Filter drains are proposed alongside the taxiway edge to drain the taxiway and runoff water would drain into the existing airfield drainage network. The design would meet the required aviation and technical standards.

- 2.3 It is stated that the existing Echo taxiway to the east would cease to be used and that a 20 metre section of its existing pavement would be broken out. This would be reinstated as grass airfield.
- 2.4 In support of the consultation, the applicants, Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL), state that the main purpose of the development is:

“to provide an additional fast exit route off the runway for landing aircraft in a location that is optimised for landing Code C aircraft. This will improve the resilience of the Runway and on-time performance, by reducing the delays which result when a landing aircraft has to ‘go around’ because of previous aircraft has not vacated the runway. It also offers potential to increase runway operations at peak times from 55 to 56 movements per hour which could offer up to an additional 11 aircraft operations per day.”

- 2.5 The proposal is a planning consultation by Gatwick Airport Limited in respect of permitted development under Class F of Part 8 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. GAL benefit from generous permitted development rights under this Class. The permitted development rights cover:

“carrying out on operational land by a relevant airport operator or its agent of development (including the erection or alteration of an operational building) in connection with the provision of services and facilities at a relevant airport.”

The permitted developments rights under Class F are subject to a condition requiring GAL to consult with the local planning authority before carrying out any development.

PLANNING HISTORY:-

- 3.1 There is extensive planning history for the airport. Of relevance to this proposal is CR/2019/3002/EIA which was a request for a Screening Opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (As Amended) for the proposed additional rapid exit taxiway on main runway (westerly operations). On 20th May 2019, the LPA concluded that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required.

PLANNING POLICY:-

- 4.1 As stated above, the proposal is a planning consultation by Gatwick Airport Limited in respect of permitted development under Class F of Part 8 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
- 4.2 The site is within the operational airport boundary of Gatwick Airport. While there is extensive planning policy guidance on proposals at Gatwick, **these policies have no weight if the development is considered to be ‘permitted development.’** However, if there is a conflict with policy or guidance, this can be highlighted as part of the LPA response. The relevant policy is listed below.

Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030

- 4.3 Policy GAT1 relates to ‘Development of the Airport with a Single Runway’. It states:

“Within the airport boundary as set out on the Local Plan Map, the council will support the development of facilities which contribute to the safe and efficient operation of the airport as a single runway, two terminal airport up to 45 million passengers per annum provided that:

- i. The proposed use is appropriate within the airport boundary and contributes to the safe and efficient operation of the airport; and*
- ii. Satisfactory safeguards are in place to mitigate the impact of the operation of the airport on the environment including noise, air quality, flooding, surface access, visual impact and climate change; and*
- iii. The proposed use would not be incompatible with the potential expansion of the airport to accommodate the construction of an additional wide spaced runway.”*

Draft Crawley Borough Local Plan 2020-2035 – Consultation Draft

4.4 The emerging draft Local Plan is currently out to ‘early engagement consultation’ and is at a very early stage in the review process. It cannot therefore be accorded any significant weight

4.5 Within the emerging draft plan, Policy GAT1 – Development of the Airport with a Single Runway’ states:

“Within the airport boundary as set out on the Local Plan Map, the council will support the development of facilities which contribute to the sustainable growth of Gatwick Airport as a single runway, two terminal airport provided that:

i. The proposed use is appropriate within the airport boundary and contributes to the safe, secure and efficient operation of the airport; and

ii. The impacts of the operation of the airport on the environment, including noise, air quality, flooding, surface access, visual impact and climate change, are minimised, where required appropriate mitigation is provided and, as a last resort, fair compensation is secured; and

iii. Adequate supporting infrastructure, particularly for surface access, is in place; and

iv. Benefits to Crawley’s local economy and community are maximised.

Mitigation, compensation, infrastructure and benefits will be expected to be secured through a S106 Agreement.

Where development to enable sustainable growth at Gatwick Airport will be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, i-iv above will be expected to be met by the airport operator and secured through a S106 Agreement.

If land is required to be safeguarded for future runway growth, any development of the airport in the meantime should not be incompatible with the potential expansion of the airport to accommodate the construction of an additional wide spaced runway.”

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:-

5.1 This application is made under Class F, Part 8 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. As part of this process the airport operator is required to consult with the Local Planning Authority.

5.2 The key considerations are whether the proposal is considered to comply with the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 8, Class F of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and whether the Local Planning Authority has any comments to make. Class F states:

Class F – development at an airport

Permitted development

F. The carrying out on operational land by a relevant airport operator or its agent of development (including the erection or alteration of an operational building) in connection with the provision of services and facilities at a relevant airport.

Development not permitted

F.1 *Development is not permitted by Class F if it would consist of or include—*

(a) the construction or extension of a runway;

(b) the construction of a passenger terminal the floor space of which would exceed 500 square metres;

(c) the extension or alteration of a passenger terminal, where the floor space of the building as existing at 5th December 1988 or, if built after that date, of the building as built, would be exceeded by more than 15%;

(d) the erection of a building other than an operational building; or

(e) the alteration or reconstruction of a building other than an operational building, where its design or external appearance would be materially affected.

Condition

F.2 Development is permitted by Class F subject to the condition that the relevant airport operator consults the local planning authority before carrying out any development, unless that development falls within the description in paragraph F.4.

Interpretation of Class F

F.3 For the purposes of paragraph F.1, floor space is calculated by external measurement and without taking account of the floor space in any pier or satellite.

F.4 Development falls within this paragraph if—

(a) it is urgently required for the efficient running of the airport, and

(b) it consists of the carrying out of works, or the erection or construction of a structure or of an ancillary building, or the placing on land of equipment, and the works, structure, building, or equipment do not exceed 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity.

5.3 The proposed development is on operational land and is to be carried out by the relevant airport operator. The works are in connection with the provision of services and facilities at the airport. The proposal is considered to meet the requirements of section F1. It is not classed as a construction or extension of a runway, as the alteration is for a taxiway and not works to the runway.

5.4 Notification has been carried out in line with the requirements set out in F.2.

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (As Amended)

5.5 This proposal is not EIA development, as confirmed by the screening opinion issued by the Local Planning Authority on 20th May 2019 (CR/2019/3002/EIA).

Key issues:

5.6 This application falls within the Class F definition of Permitted Development, though attention must still be afforded to CBLP Policy GAT1, which supports development of facilities within the airport boundary that contribute to the safe and efficient operation of the airport as a single runway, two terminal airport up to 45 million passengers per annum. This policy support is subject to three criteria which are discussed in more detail, under the following headings, and also addresses the concerns and issues raised in the representations received relating to this consultation.

i) Is the use appropriate and does it contribute to the safe and efficient operation of the airport?

5.7 It is considered that the proposed RET would contribute to the safe and efficient operation of the airport within its existing one runway, two terminal configuration. GAL states that the main purpose and benefit of the RET is to improve the resilience of the operation of Runway 26L (Gatwick's main runway when used for landings in westerly operations) by reducing the delays and effect on 'on-time' aircraft performance which occur as a result of landing aircraft having to 'go around' when a landing is aborted on the final stages of approach. It is stated that this most often occurs when a departing or preceding arriving aircraft has not fully vacated the runway. The purpose of the RET is to provide an additional exit point for westerly arrivals so that aircraft can more quickly vacate the runway and therefore reduce the risk of aircraft 'go around'. This is considered a positive noise and environmental benefit to the surrounding area and would improve the operational efficiency of the airport.

5.8 Reducing aircraft time on the runway and 'go arounds' will have a knock on effect on potential runway capacity and the RET is also intended to offer the potential to increase the number of aircraft operations on the runway at peak times by a maximum of one operation per hour. The current declared peak capacity of movements is 55 per hour. The proposed RET could increase this to 56 movements, equating to an additional 11 movements per day. This is equivalent to an extra 720,000 additional passengers per year.

5.9 This proposal has the potential to increase the number of passengers further beyond the 45million passengers per annum (mppa) cap set out in the current Local Plan Policy GAT1 and is considered to be a potential departure from this policy. However, this policy is now in conflict with the

Government's more recently published policy for aviation "*Beyond the Horizon, Making the Best use of Existing Runways,*" which states that it supports airports throughout the UK making best use of their existing runways, subject to environmental issues being addressed. This change in Government policy is now reflected in the emerging Crawley Borough Local Plan policy GAT1, which also recognises that the draft Gatwick Masterplan (now published) anticipates that even with a single runway by 2032 there may be up to 61 mppa.

- 5.10 The proposed development would therefore assist in making the best use of the existing runway in accordance with Government policy and the emerging Local Plan Policy GAT1, it is therefore considered that this should be weighed positively against the conflict with the currently adopted policy GAT1.
- ii) Are satisfactory safeguards in place to mitigate the impact of the operation of the airport on the environment including noise, air quality, flooding, surface access, visual impact and climate change?
- 5.11 The visual impact of the physical works associated with the construction of the taxiway /hardstanding are considered minimal in context of the wider airport.
- 5.12 The site is within Flood Zone 2. However, the RET is not considered a use vulnerable to flooding and the supporting information indicates that, with mitigation measures, this would not materially alter run-off flows or increase flood risk with its drainage connecting into the airport's existing surface drainage / pollution and flood management system.
- 5.13 The RET could have a positive environmental impact in that its stated purpose is to reduce the number of 'go arounds'. It is stated that 698 'go arounds' occurred in 2018. These are most common on westerly approaches, due to the prevailing winds meaning the runway is used in this direction for around 70% of the time. It is stated these 'go around' aircraft follow a standard procedure and typically fly at lower altitude over areas that do not normally experience overflight (such as Crawley). This is usually at peak times for the airport between hours 10:00 – 14:00 and in the summer months. It is suggested that the reduction in 'go arounds' would mean a small reduction in aircraft noise for residents south and east of the airport. It is also stated there would be a small decrease in ground noise for residents to the west due to a shorter taxiing route although this is unlikely to be noticeable.
- 5.14 The RET could have an increased environmental impact in another respect, as it has the potential to increase runway movements from 55 to 56 per hour over 11 hours of the day. It is considered though that the related increase in noise and aircraft movements (over current levels) would not be significant. Similarly, it is considered that ground noise from the additional aircraft would not increase noticeably.
- 5.15 GAL state that the positive impacts of the RET reducing 'go arounds' would be experienced during peak periods. What is not clear is whether the impact would be cancelled out and worsened by the increased capacity as result of potential additional aircraft movements during the daytime. There are no changes to night flights or night noise levels as result of this development.
- 5.16 In respect of traffic generation, the RET would result in additional road traffic vehicle emissions as a result of increased passenger numbers at the airport. The submitted information shows that an additional 1,650 vehicle trips would be generated per day which, in the context of current traffic levels (equating to less than 2% increase in the 82,000 vehicle movements per day on the M23 Gatwick Spur), would not have a significant impact on the highway network. The majority of passengers would arrive using the M23 Spur Road and Airport Way where a 2 - 2.5% increase in road capacity is predicted (equating to an additional 50 trips in each direction per hour along these roads). It is not considered that these highway impacts are significant, given the level of traffic already generated by the airport. Furthermore, the smart motorway and spur road improvements are under construction and will add capacity to the road network in advance of the proposed RET works.

- 5.17 In relation to air quality, GAL has considered the impact of the RET on the nearby AQMAs based on increased aircraft emissions and traffic flows. In respect of aircraft emissions, the 11 additional flights are considered not to have any material impact. For traffic impacts, the evidence has concluded there would not be significant air quality change in these locations. The modelling provided suggests that within both the Air Quality Management Areas the traffic increase would be below the 100 ADDT (Annual Average Daily Trips) which, in the IAQM Guidance, would trigger a more detailed air quality assessment.
- 5.18 There is limited information provided on climate change, although officers requested GAL respond on this point as part of the EIA Screening opinion. GAL commented that the development would be designed to be resilient to climate change. Gatwick also has a wider target to reduce emissions from the airport and is on target to do this, although the calculations for this are complex. The CO₂ emissions would increase by 1.4% with the additional flights.
- 5.19 Overall, it is considered that there are satisfactory environmental safeguards in place to mitigate this development and the proposal accords with GAT criterion (ii) in the Local Plan.
- iii) Is the development compatible with the potential expansion of the airport to accommodate the construction of an additional wide spaced runway?
- 5.20 The development would not be incompatible with the expansion of the airport to accommodate a second wide-spaced runway which, if this came forward as a proposal, would be located on land to the south of the main runway.
- 5.21 It was stated by GAL, in the EIA Screening submission provided in April this year, that the RET is unrelated to the potential proposals in the draft Gatwick Masterplan to use the standby runway for additional growth. Should this proposal come forward, it would be subject to its own detailed assessments and consenting process including the requirement to consider the impact of such a project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

CONCLUSIONS:-

- 6.1 The proposal is not EIA development. It would accord with the requirements of Schedule 2, Part 8, Class F of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) and it is not considered that it raises significant issues on which the Local Planning Authority needs to comment. It is therefore considered that no objection should be made to the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION RE: CR/2019/0448/CON

No objection.

