

## Gatwick Airport Draft Master Plan 2018

### Analysis of potential impacts on Chichester District arising from Gatwick Airport Draft Master Plan

#### *Economic considerations*

- i. The airport is estimated to sustain approximately 71,000 jobs, with 24,000 of those directly employed by the airport. Its net impact on the economy within the immediate vicinity of the airport (the 'Gatwick Diamond') is currently estimated to be approximately £1.4 billion per annum.
- ii. The wider trends of increasing air travel, and the interdependency with the economy, indicates that the capacity of airports needs to continue to increase even if only to ensure that the economic competitiveness of an area is maintained at existing levels. Clearly, the greater the capacity of the airport, the greater the potential benefits to the economic growth of the area. This includes the provision of additional direct jobs, as well as those created elsewhere within the wider economy.
- iii. With regard to the economic impact on Chichester District, the potential direct impact is likely to be relatively limited given existing economic links, commuting patterns and available infrastructure. Indeed, Census data indicates that only 1,900 out of c.54,000 Chichester District residents worked in the entire Crawley Borough area (including Gatwick Airport) in 2011. However, indirectly the airport has a greater significance in the district through the sustaining and creation of existing jobs in related sectors of the economy, and the general asset that an airport of Gatwick's size has in attracting and retaining businesses within its vicinity. The airport also has significant potential benefits in terms of the support for tourism into Chichester District, a matter which Visit Chichester is well placed to exploit. Longer term opportunities may be generated for educational links to be created with educational establishments in Chichester District, including the University of Chichester.
- iv. With regard to the impact of airport growth on the infrastructure within the vicinity of the airport, there are already planned capacity increases to local roads and the M23, combined with continuing emphasis on encouraging non-car based travel to the airport for passengers and staff. In considering future growth options for the airport, very little evidence (such as a Transport Study) appears to have been prepared which considers the potential impact on the surrounding infrastructure and wider road network including roads within Chichester District. Nevertheless the master plan implies that the increased utilisation of the existing runway is expected to be able to be generally achievable within the existing infrastructure.
- v. Clearly further evidence will be required to inform this judgement, as well as to identifying the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to arise if either scenario 2 or 3 are pursued. This evidence should include

consideration of the road and rail capacity to areas to the south of Gatwick Airport to accommodate projected needs, as well as scope for improvement.

#### *Social considerations*

- vi. The future growth in capacity of Gatwick Airport could have implications for the demand for housing in the surrounding area. This is likely to be a particular consideration where capacity is expected to increase significantly and over and above previous trends e.g. through the regular use of the standby runway or the development of a new runway. In such circumstances, it will be important to understand the impact that the additional jobs created could have on the need for housing in the surrounding and wider area.
- vii. Whilst some of these new jobs could reasonably be expected to be taken by existing residents, the greater the number of jobs created the more likely it is that workers will be expected to be recruited from elsewhere. In such circumstances, this may well generate a need for additional housing development in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport to accommodate these workers. This area is already struggling to meet forecast housing needs and has significant affordability challenges. With the existing pressures on the housing market in the area, the potential increased demand arising could have potential implications for the wider area, including Chichester District.
- viii. No evidence is forthcoming within the master plan in this regard, nor is the matter discussed. Within the context of the housing pressures already experienced by local authorities within the immediate vicinity of the airport, as well as further afield, the imperative to begin understanding these potential impacts should be emphasised.

#### *Environmental considerations*

- ix. The principal environmental impacts in relation to landscape, biodiversity, air quality and noise are expected to occur within the localised areas around Gatwick Airport. These impacts typically arise from both the aircraft movements, and the associated infrastructure required and land-based traffic generated.
- x. In general terms, air travel continues to have a significant impact on climate change, most directly through aircraft emissions. The industry has made considerable improvements to mitigate this impact, particularly through the introduction of more efficient aircraft, and greater utilisation of passenger space. However, with a continued reliance on fossil fuels, the increased volume of flights experienced in recent years, and projected in the future represents a significant challenge.
- xi. In relation to the impacts on Chichester District, the principal environmental impacts relate to the noise disturbance arising from aircraft in the course of taking off and landing. These impacts are focussed in the northern part of the District, albeit that these are typically considered to be well within tolerable limits.

- xii. The air noise footprint of Gatwick's operations is measured and reported annually in the form of noise contour reports. The Civil Aviation Authority's Environmental Research and Consultancy Department has produced actual noise contours for 2017 and projected noise contours for 2028 and 2032.
- xiii. With the existing main runway in use, the noise metrics for both day and night for the population around Gatwick show significant decreases in numbers of persons affected despite growth in passenger numbers and flights through to 2032. This is primarily due to a modernisation of the aircraft fleet utilising quieter models that more than offset noise increases in flight activity.
- xiv. With the potential for the standby runway to be utilised within the day-to-day operation of the airport, there would inevitably be a greater increase in flight activity up to 2032. Nevertheless there is projected to be minimal change to the numbers exposed to the various noise levels from the contours mapped for 2017. Again this is explained by the anticipated replacement of aircraft with quieter models.
- xv. It follows from these noise projections for each of the Gatwick expansion scenarios that residents within Chichester District who experience noise from aircraft traffic from the west of Gatwick are likely to experience similar reductions in day and night noise through the use of quieter aircraft. Clearly these projections will need to be carefully scrutinised in the event of any subsequent development proposals. As such, it is suggested that the Council identifies potential noise impacts on residents in the north of the District as an area of potential concern.
- xvi. Whilst the introduction of an additional runway would be likely to present an increase in numbers being exposed to noise during the day, the projections also indicate that there is likely to still be a reduction in the numbers exposed to the highest levels of noise exposure. No figures are presented for the night time exposure to noise, albeit it is considered that these are likely to be worse than present exposure levels.
- xvii. The plan does not go into any detail about the geographical areas affected, other than numbers of the population exposed to various noise metrics. The preferential flight routes ultimately selected are not discussed although it is likely to affect a much wider area, including parts of Chichester District.
- xviii. Significant increases in flight numbers may present a different pattern of noise by spreading noise more evenly with less respite between overflights. The introduction of an additional runway at Gatwick may impose new noise on areas of existing tranquillity.
- xix. The Council would, for the reasons stated above, have some concerns about the future expansion proposals, particularly with the final proposal that may include an additional new runway to the south, which it is felt will impact on the amenity of Chichester District by increasing disturbance and emissions particularly across rural areas.

## Appendix 2

### Recommended response of Chichester District Council to Gatwick Airport Draft Master Plan consultation

- i. This Council continues to be supportive of the role that Gatwick Airport plays within the wider region and the positive contribution it makes to Chichester District.
- ii. The need to ensure that the airport continues to provide sufficient capacity to meet anticipated need is recognised, particularly within the context of national policies that seek to ensure that airports optimise the use of their infrastructure, including runways.
- iii. Accordingly, support is given to the option set out in Scenario 1 of continuing to optimise the capacity of the main runway of the airport.
- iv. With regard to the additional growth options presented, the potential of Scenario 2 for bringing into active use the existing standby runway is acknowledged to have the potential to also be in accordance with existing national policy. Nevertheless, this is likely to require consent from the Secretary of State through the Development Consent Order process. At this stage, insufficient information and evidence is available to fully inform a considered response to this option, particularly the potential noise impact on residents in the northern parishes of Chichester District, the existing infrastructure to the south of the airport and any potential additional need for housing arising in the wider area. Other associated impacts are also unknown e.g. the potential for a deterioration in air quality as a result of increased traffic congestion on local roads. Opportunities to improve links and infrastructure from Chichester District towards Gatwick Airport should be taken, including enhancements to rail services to and from Chichester and improvements to the north-south road network beyond the present focus of the A23/M23 spine.
- v. Scenario 3 which proposes to safeguard land for a wholly new runway is noted. Current government policy is clear that the identified future demand for an additional runway in the south east of England should be provided at Heathrow Airport. In this context, and taking into account the broad planning principle that land should only be safeguarded for future use where there is a reasonable prospect of it coming forward, the justification for this approach is questioned. Furthermore, the absence of any significant evidence to understand the potential impacts arising from this option makes it difficult to comment further at this time. Nevertheless, the reservations expressed in relation to Scenario 2 equally remain relevant to this scenario, as do the need to take opportunities to improve the links and infrastructure from Chichester District towards Gatwick Airport.