

A Second Runway at Gatwick ?

THE RUNWAY FACTS

References are to paragraphs in the GACC brief “*Gatwick Unwrapped*” which contains a full explanation and the original sources

Size. A two runway Gatwick is forecast to handle 96 million passengers a year, making it bigger than Heathrow at present. ⁽⁴⁾

Jobs. At present there are 23,200 airport jobs. A second runway would add about an extra 20,000 airport jobs. On top of this new firms attracted to the area, or expansion of existing firms, would add another 25,000. And a further local 15,000 jobs would be created when those employees spent their money. Total around 60,000. ⁽⁵⁻⁹⁾

In-migration. Due to low unemployment locally, the extra jobs would lead to large scale in-migration from other parts of the UK and from the EU.

New houses. About 40,000 new houses would be needed, equivalent to a new town the size of Crawley. And a severe strain on local hospitals, schools etc ⁽¹⁰⁻¹³⁾

Businesses. 286 business premises would be demolished. ⁽¹⁴⁻¹⁵⁾

Proximity. The new airport boundary would be only 100 yards from the residential area of Crawley. ⁽¹⁶⁻¹⁸⁾

Noise. Three times as many people as at present would be significantly affected by aircraft noise. ⁽¹⁹⁻²²⁾

Noise worse in rural areas. Because of the low background noise, aircraft cause more annoyance in rural areas and AONBs. So any comparison with Heathrow numbers is invalid. ⁽²³⁻²⁵⁾

New flight paths over previously peaceful areas would cause intense disturbance, distress and anger. ⁽³⁰⁻⁴⁰⁾



Road congestion. Air passengers plus Gatwick employees plus employees in new firms would mean an average 100,000 more vehicles a day. Plus more commercial traffic. Gatwick only propose minor improvements. Therefore M25 likely to be at a standstill. Traffic jams at all local junctions. ⁽⁴³⁻⁵⁰⁾

Rail over-crowding. Over 90,000 extra people a day due to use rail services in vicinity of Gatwick. Improvements planned but all are needed just to deal with forecast growth without a 2nd runway. Result - standing room only. ⁽⁵¹⁻⁵⁶⁾

Heritage. 19 listed buildings would be demolished - more than at any time since the WW II blitz. ⁽⁵⁷⁻⁶¹⁾ 14 hectares of ancient woodland would be destroyed with no adequate replacement possible. ⁽⁶²⁾

Climate change. Twice the number of flights would mean twice the climate change damage. And twice the local pollution. ⁽⁶⁷⁻⁶⁸⁾

Economic benefits? Extra income would mainly accrue to new workers moving into the area, not to existing residents. There would be an adverse national effect in worsening the north-south divide ⁽⁶⁹⁻⁷³⁾

Tax subsidy. Airlines pay no fuel tax and no VAT. Only a quarter is balanced by air passenger duty. Gatwick Airport has paid no corporation tax for the past four years. These tax subsidies make air fares artificially cheap.

Worse for passengers. The cost of a second runway would be borne by Gatwick passengers, with airport charges per head going up from £9 to £15-£23. That would be unattractive to low-cost airlines. ⁽⁷⁹⁻⁸²⁾

Risk of decline ? A new runway at Heathrow would mean charges there rising to £28-32 while Gatwick charges would remain at around £9. So no risk of airlines moving to Heathrow. ⁽⁸³⁾

No need for any new runway. If the trend for more passengers per plane continues - there will be no need for a new runway. Stansted and other airports north of London are only half full ⁽⁸⁶⁻⁸⁸⁾

www.gacc.org.uk gacc@btconnect.com