

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Culture, Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Economic Development Committee

## Agenda Item 24

**Subject:** Consultation on Application to Intensify Use of Gatwick Airport

**Date of meeting:** 15 September 2023

**Report of:** Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

**For general release**

### 1. Purpose of the report and policy context

1.1 This report seeks delegated authority from the Committee for planning officers to respond to consultation on an application to intensify the use of Gatwick Airport. This is necessary to meet strict deadlines set by the Planning Inspectorate.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 That Committee agrees to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Culture, in consultation with the Chair of the Culture, Heritage, Sport Tourism and Economic Development Committee, to submit responses to consultation on the Gatwick Development Consent Order (DCO), as set out at paragraph 3.7.

2.2 That Committee notes that the Council's response will be made publicly available and the additional opportunities for representations as set out at paragraph 3.7 to 3.10 of the report.

### 3. Context and background information

3.1 On 6 July 2023, Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) submitted an application to the Planning Inspectorate to use the existing northern (standby) runway to accommodate an increase in annual passengers from 46 million to an anticipated 80.2 million, with an annual cap of 386,000 air traffic movements. To do so there would be various amendments and development to taxiways, terminals and ancillary facilities, as well as highways and rivers.

3.2 This involves various proposed works comprising:

- alterations to the existing northern runway, including repositioning its centreline 12 metres further north to enable dual runway operations;

- reconfiguration of taxiways;
  - pier and stand amendments (including a proposed new pier);
  - reconfiguration of other existing airfield facilities;
  - extensions to the North and South Terminals;
  - provision of additional hotels and commercial space;
  - provision of reconfigured car parking, including new surface and multi-storey car parks;
  - surface access (highway) improvements;
  - reconfiguration of existing utilities, including surface water, foul drainage and power; and
  - landscape/ecological planting and environmental mitigation.
- 3.3 Because of the increase in passenger numbers proposed, and the works to a motorway (the M23), the scheme is considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). These are schemes the government considers so big and nationally-important that permission must be given at the national level. Such applications are made directly to the Planning Inspectorate which carries out an Examination before making a recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State, in this case the Secretary of State for Transport.
- 3.4 The Planning Inspectorate confirmed on 3 August 2023 that it had accepted the DCO application for Examination. The application is therefore in the three month Pre-examination stage. After this there will be a public Examination with the Planning Inspectorate having six months to examine the application, and three months to make its recommendation to the Secretary of State.
- 3.5 The formal Examination of the application is expected to begin in November. In advance of this, consultees, including BHCC will be required to make initial comments in:
- a Local Impact Report (setting out officers' technical views on potential impacts); and
  - Relevant Representation (setting out the Council's view on the application).
- 3.6 The deadline for these comments has not yet been set but is expected to be in October.
- 3.7 Given this short timescale, delegated authority is requested by officers, in consultation with the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Culture and the Chair of the Culture, Heritage, Sport Tourism and Economic Development Committee, to submit a Local Impact Report (setting out officers' technical views on potential impacts), and Relevant Representation (setting out the Council's view on the application) by the deadline, when provided.
- 3.8 In principle, it is proposed that the response will include officers' technical views on the potential impacts on the city, including on local infrastructure, and input from Transport Officers regarding the assessment of the impact on the highway. It will also detail the Council's view on the wider implications of

the proposal. This will include concerns over climate change impacts, noting BHCC's drive to become carbon neutral by 2030 and the national target of net zero carbon by 2050.

- 3.9 The response will be made publicly available on the Council's website, as well as on the Planning Inspectorate's website relating to the application.
- 3.10 If councillors (or political parties, members of the public etc.) wish to make their own representation on the application, they can also do so directly to the Planning Inspectorate during this Pre-examination period, and anyone can ask to be heard as an interested party at the Examination. Details will be provided to councillors once the consultation period has opened.

#### **4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options**

- 4.1 Providing a response to the consultation on the expansion of Gatwick will ensure the Council's views on the scheme and its potential positive and negative impacts on the City are taken into account when the Secretary of State determines the application.
- 4.2 A more detailed response could be provided. The local authorities most directly affected by the expansion (Crawley Borough Council, West Sussex County Council and various Surrey authorities) along with consultees including National Highways and the Environment Agency are providing more detailed responses in relation to issues such as the physical works and noise impacts. However, it is not considered necessary for BHCC to do so, given the limits of the potential impact, and the significant resource implications for planning officers in particular.
- 4.3 Alternatively, a response could not be provided. However, this would mean that BHCC's views would not be taken into account at all in determining the application.

#### **5. Community engagement and consultation**

- 5.1 The developer (Gatwick Airport Limited) is responsible for carrying out extensive formal consultation prior to submitting a DCO application, which they have done. If the Planning Inspectorate was not satisfied with the extent of consultation undertaken they could have refused to accept the application.
- 5.2 Two rounds of consultation were undertaken, in Autumn 2021 and Summer 2022, with a dedicated website set up, advertising and other publicity carried out. A Mobile Project Office was set up in numerous locations to distribute consultation materials, including at Asda Hollingbury in November 2021. For those more local to the Airport, newsletters were sent and additional consultation events undertaken.
- 5.3 Further publicity will be undertaken by Gatwick now that the application has been submitted.
- 5.4 Because of the requirement that the developer publicises the scheme, none of the local authorities carry out their own consultation or community engagement.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 An application has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate to expand Gatwick Airport to facilitate the increase in annual passenger numbers from 46 million to an anticipated 80.2 million, with an annual cap of 386,000 air traffic movements. Delegated authority is sought for planning officers to respond to this, in consultation with Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Culture and the Chair of the Culture, Heritage, Sport Tourism and Economic Development Committee, and if necessary, to appear at the Examination. The timescales for responding to the consultation are short, so this would enable the Council's views to be taken into account when the application is determined.

## **7. Financial implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The cost of officer time and document production associated with the recommendation in this report are contained within existing service budgets. Any significant variations to budget will be reported as part of the council's monthly budget monitoring process.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack    Date consulted: 24/08/2023

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. The Council does not have a duty to respond to the consultation.

Name of lawyer consulted: Katie Kam    Date consulted: 24/08/2023

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 The developer will need to ensure the airport expansion and the consultation on it meets the requirements of the Equality Act. There are no direct implications for the Council in relation to equalities.

## **10. Sustainability implications**

- 10.1 Sustainable development is at the heart of the planning system, so will have to form a key consideration when the government determines whether the expansion of Gatwick airport is acceptable. The Council's view on the implications in terms of sustainability will be set out in the response to the consultation including mitigation measures.