

Gatwick Obviously Not

Question & Answer event – Thursday 1st September at 7.30pm in Peshurst Village Hall

Contemporary Notes (not Minutes)

Key:

AS – Andy Sinclair, Head of Noise and Airspace Strategy, Gatwick Airport.

RS – Cllr Richard Streatfeild MBE, Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign representative on Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee

CL – Charles Lloyd, Gatwick Obviously Not and Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign.

MB – Martin Barraud, Gatwick Obviously Not

In most instances the person putting a question advised where they lived and we have used that information here, not their names.

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| Q1 | <p>Chiddingstone: Everyone here in the past 8 years has suffered and hopefully we can do this on a positive basis. Gatwick is looking to add an additional 29m passengers in a climate emergency, and is looking to build a runway near the existing taxiway. Gatwick says that it needs to develop the northern runway to take capacity from 63m to 75m passengers a year because it is nearing capacity but the airport has never handled 63m. How does Gatwick intend to increase capacity to 75m passengers? Also, where in the world does RNN [Reduced Night Noise trial] work?</p> <p>AS The focus of the night noise trial is to reduce noise at night. The Independent Arrivals Review covered night noise. I cannot stop night noise but I can help to improve the operational performance in the night by systemising how aircraft arrives at the airport. Currently aircraft are controlled at the south coast manually to get them on the flight path at 10-14nm from the airport. Part of the research we had was a study of communities and the effect of outlier noise which wakes and disturbs people at night. Designed approaches to the airport control the optimal noise so the noisiest aircraft are told to fly at the optimal noise level. Manual vectoring aircraft is done to spread the flight paths. We have got to look to the future, so today the manual vectoring is done by talking to the pilot, but in future F&ED [Fair and Equitable Dispersal] of aircraft is the only way to minimise arrival noise. The trial is to reduce the noise of arriving aircraft and if there is evidence from the noise monitors we can knock it on the head. We want to listen to people and we will try to deliver what communities want.</p> <p>CL Night flights – Gatwick is looking to grow its business and some communities might accept no future night flights in exchange for growth during the day. A ban on night flights was a requirement of Heathrow’s expansion. Could this suggestion be included in Gatwick’s growth plans?</p> <p>AS Gatwick stopped growing and this year we are at 80-90% of 2019’s capacity. Gatwick had to put a cap on the number of ATM. We have had a really busy summer and we are expecting growth throughout the year. We are increasing capacity at the airport without using the northern runway.</p> |
| 2 | <p>West Peshurst: How much of a reprieve can be expected with dispersion? Some days the whole swathe is used and this makes a huge difference. Why can you do this on some days and not on others? It is the amount of concentration that wrecks people’s lives. 2019 had the first night trial consultation – does it depend on the original flight paths, eg route 3? Why are there only 4 routes? Will there be more in future?</p> <p>AS PBN [Performance Based Navigation – concentrating flight paths via use of satellite technology] is a change from analogue to satellite navigation. The place where the aircraft originates from, its departing airport, will decide which arrival route the aircraft will follow (Note – is this right??) between the hours of 1.30am and 5am. Designated PBN routes use the existing hot spots for aircraft traffic. There is technology that allows you to determine the number of routes. There is the capacity for numerous routes, some at different times of the day for example. The trial was not to determine where the routes will be. The current routes are from historic air traffic and are not for future traffic, and the number of current routes isn’t</p> |

necessarily going to be the number of future routes either. Tactical vectoring comes under NATS. From my experience sometimes the ATC [Air Traffic Control] are trying to fill in gaps in aircraft arrivals and the routes are determined by things such as wind conditions or even a trainee ATC. The Arrivals Review sought to review the arrival swathe, looking at the joining point between 7nm and 10nm from the runway. An 8nm point was agreed and endorsed by the CAA [Civil Aviation Authority] by safety reasons. Airspace modernisation may allow us to deliver distribution and we are pushing for F&ED. However, different communities may want different distribution of aircraft. There will be a F&ED consultation with design options.

RS Ten years ago, Charles Kirwan-Taylor said that Gatwick is a corporate tiger that will never let up. There were 53m ATM [Air Traffic Movements ie arrivals and departures] in 2013, rising from 45m ATM in 2012 which used the 7nm joining point. There were 63m in 2017. The route over Langton Green, Speldhurst, Penshurst and Chiddingstone is the optimal route for both speed and size of aircraft to be stable on approach. The night noise trial can only be carried out at times of low aircraft traffic. If there are large numbers of aircraft they have to be manually vectored but this is only possible over a smaller swathe. We must resist a narrow swathe at all costs over the next couple of years. The hold is at Mayfield at 10,000ft, which is 20nm from the runway, and aircraft have to get onto the final descent at a 3 degree angle in a 2-3nm wide swathe.

AS In the current environment it is difficult to deliver what people want in the future. Operational procedures would support PBN is a time-based operation. The separation between large and small aircraft at different speeds, depending upon wind conditions, will be much more manageable under satellite based navigation systems.

3 Marsh Green: we are experiencing aircraft at 3000ft with their undercarriage down at night every 1 minute 20 seconds. We are blighted 24/7 with no respite. Between 2am and 3am there are 11 aircraft overhead. Is this because there are cheaper landing fees at night?

AS Night charges – Gatwick charges more at night, it costs £2,500 to land at night compared to £900 in the day. There are higher charges at night for noisier aircraft to encourage airlines to use quieter aircraft at night.

4 Speldhurst: why do some planes fly at 2,100ft and some at 3,000ft, why do Wizz Air and Vueling fly at 1200 and 1400ft? Why can't all the aircraft fly at higher altitudes?

AS Gatwick has an Airspace Office which engages with airlines and pilots on individual flights. An example is a pilot who flew a poor descent, he did not fly as he anticipated. The Airspace Office would question the airline and the pilot concerned about this landing. The pilot has to decide how he lands his plane, he has to fly in the most optimal way, which will save fuel and reduce noise. We are expecting a refined definition in the coming months on CDA and this will then be fed to airlines and pilots. Bunching of aircraft may occur under a manually vectored process but this won't happen under PBN.

5 In 2026, will our lives be better or worse?

AS In my view, lives will be better with technology for multiple approaches.

RS Night noise – every campaign group wants no night flights and to compensate, we will accept almost anything during the day. Gatwick say that their business model only works if they have night flights. Last year, there was a 50/50 split between easterly and westerly winds which meant that communities did not suffer as much. This year, a particularly hot summer so people had their windows open, and night capacity was running at 100%. Night time noise is the most damaging to health, to children's learning and it reduces life expectancy. This is because you are woken from a deep sleep, then fall into another deep sleep, only to be woken again. This disturbed sleep pattern is damaging to health.

AS The Government controls night time capacity. The DfT has to balance economic benefit vs disadvantages to communities. There is a cap on the number of ATM at night and a cap on the total amount of noise at night.

6 The introduction of Global Navigation Satellite Systems which gives the safest approach, descent and efficiency compared to manual interventions by ATC. The system does not seem to do that. What is your continuous improvement process in terms of your performance and how does this impact noise?

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| | <p>AS It is difficult to operationally improve. It can be done through airspace design or with new types of aircraft which are more efficient and quieter. The Airspace Office works with pilots on how they perform. The hold is currently at 7000ft. We want this to be higher and further out.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Penshurst: what is possible once we have satellite navigation? How many paths can there be and how can they be rotated to make the noise impact fair for everyone?</p> <p>AS I cannot answer this, but we are working towards that with technology and with what we are allowed to do on policy grounds. F&ED will cover both arrivals and departures. Current policy does not recognise that a mile in the swathe makes a difference to communities. We are doing two things (i) F&ED and (ii) reduced departure divergence. This will allow the CAA to change policy to F&ED on departures.</p> <p>RS In 2016 I designed a map showing 6 routes 2nm apart. This allowed 50 ATM. There is no hope for dispersed routes under PBN as it would reduce capacity. We do not want a second runway which would increase capacity. We need routes to be dispersed under PBN.</p> |
| 8 | <p>Penshurst: there is evidence that harm has been caused to the AONB and to communities. One of the motivations must be to increase the number of landing slots and therefore profits. The owners of Gatwick say that they protect the environment and communities. Have you conveyed out feelings to your shareholders and would they be willing to come and attend a meeting with us?</p> <p>AS I can't speak on behalf of the shareholders. Our owners take carbon emissions very seriously and we out-perform current Government targets. We should be clear, the Government has to tread a fine line. Aviation and the people in the aviation business suffered badly through Covid. The Government must balance profit. The Airspace Modernisation Programme is increasing profit and is the best use of the existing infrastructure. Environmental impact vs allowing the economy to flourish again and mend the damage caused to businesses and people from Covid.</p> |
| 9 | <p>Groombridge: Climate Change and the Climate Emergency. We are discussing how you are going to increase ATM. Why can you morally justify increased air pollution, your carbon footprint and profits at a time of climate emergency?</p> <p>AS Aviation currently does not carry the signification proportion of carbon emissions in the UK, but we will in future as people generally shift to green energy. Our owners are trying to make the airport itself carbon neutral. There are plans to deliver means of mitigating the climate impact.</p> <p>RS Aviation is the tobacco of the 1990's. It has given pleasure and enjoyment but how it will impact people through pollution will become a global issue. Jet Zero is a work of fiction. Aviation will come to its senses eventually.</p> <p>CL Key figures from the Gatwick consultation were that the emissions will grow by 50% due to expansion. Gatwick will generate 5.5% of all UK carbon emissions by 2038 because others are reducing their emissions.</p> |
| 10 | <p>Penshurst: The types of aircraft make a difference – larger aircraft create more noise. It is not just the volume of flights, it is the type of aircraft too.</p> <p>AS It is relevant. Gatwick will increase the size of aircraft but not the A380s, although this is a relatively quiet aircraft. We only have one gate that can take an A380. The Government is tightening controls on night noise, and this will be part of the review. And there is a scheduled ban on noisier aircraft. Older conventional aircraft are noisier and the quieter aircraft are incentivised.</p> |
| 11 | <p>Chiddingstone : Why do pilots and airlines not fined by Gatwick if they fly badly and too low? If the second runway is given permission, surely the current issues need to be resolved first?</p> <p>AS Regarding the fining of pilots and airlines – pilots are told by ATC to make an optimum approach but conditions can mean that this is not possible. Compliance cannot be enforced. Best practice is that optimum approaches are made but this cannot be enforced. There are too many variables on approach. Changes to the airspace and at Gatwick will be through a DCO. The DCO for the northern runway will go to the planning inspector in the first quarter of 2023.</p> |
| 12 | <p>Chiddingstone: Low flying. 50-60 ATM below 3000ft. There is sometimes a higher aircraft. Maybe there should be incentive focus for the pilots which would make them fly higher. Below 3000ft is unbearable outside. 3000ft to 6000ft makes a big difference and we would like aircraft to be higher.</p> <p>MB Height can be won.</p> <p>AS You had have small successes. Tactically it is down to the pilots to do more and we engage with them directly, we do see improvements. Some are overseas airlines. It is possible to change</p> |

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| | <p>both vertical and horizontal routes through SBN. [PBN?] Modern aircraft are designed to be more efficient. If an aircraft is flying higher and needs to brake on approach, it could be worse for communities as noisier especially if the undercarriage is down.</p> <p>RS The airport has grown and the community is paying the price for this growth.</p> |
| 13 | <p>Speldhurst: an increase in capacity is what Gatwick wants and the Government is the only body that can say who is more important, the airport or the communities.</p> <p>AS The impact of Covid on aviation has been terrible. There are things that we can do. We have made a difference to some things such as the FoP. [The Airbus whine, now largely corrected] The combination of small initiatives have made a difference.</p> |
| 14 | <p>Bough Beech: The people at Gatwick who make these decisions, do they live under the flight path? We feel that the decision makers do not fully understand the issues that communities suffer from.</p> <p>RS For this community in particular, flights will be concentrated again as growth takes place. The size of the swathe has not changed but the use of it will change as capacity grows. The systems that Gatwick has set up have not gone far enough to help communities. The increase in capacity from 45m to 63m passengers, which could increase further with a second runway, needs to be changed.</p> |
| 15 | <p>Penshurst: we hear that you might do this, you might do that, but nothing happens.</p> <p>AS Improving individual pilots performance is so important. The Airspace Office looks at data and goes to the airlines to discuss issues.</p> |
| 16 | <p>Does ATC tell pilots the height they need to fly at on approach?</p> <p>AS Pilots will manage the vertical approach taking into account wind, fuel levels etc. We will monitor CDA [Continuous Descent Approach ie trying to make arrivals as smooth and quiet as possible] from 7000ft. Approach and landing is the second most risky part of a flight and is heavily regulated. If regulations are not abided by there are repercussions. Safe landing of the aircraft is most important.</p> |
| 17 | <p>Penshurst: Government policy on noise is inadequate and deliberately fudged through policies. There are no definitions on benefit for communities. Will the Government ask the DfT what their policy is on noise and implement it?</p> <p>CL There is an indifference at the DfT on noise. They do not care. We need a new Secretary of State for Transport and a new Aviation minister, who should be appointed soon.</p> |
| 18 | <p>When the COP24 was held, we were not in a fuel crisis, and there was no war in Ukraine. (Note, didn't get the question down!)</p> <p>RS GACC [Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign – the oldest community campaign group around Gatwick] looked at this. The airport aim was to get planning approval for growth and then to sell. Shareholders are paid from borrowing. Policy and politics are the only things that will help. There is a policy loop between NATS, [Provider of air traffic control services] the CAA, [Civil Aviation Authority] the DfT [Department for Transport] and Gatwick and nothing gets done.</p> <p>AS Demand will dictate and forecasts still show growth</p> |
| 19 | <p>MB for Penshurst resident: If faced with capacity vs widening the swathe, will Gatwick reduce the number of flights in order to accommodate the swathe?</p> <p>AS No. But we will do our best to help communities under F&ED.</p> |

Closed at 9.20pm.