

# Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign **GACC**

Campaign Office  
Stan Hill  
Charlwood  
Surrey RH6 OEP

01293 863 369  
[www.gacc.org.uk](http://www.gacc.org.uk)  
[gacc@btconnect.com](mailto:gacc@btconnect.com)

Press release

2 September 2013

## **A new town the size of Crawley ?**

30,000 - 45,000 new houses would be needed if a new runway is built at Gatwick. That is the conclusion of a study by independent consultants jointly commissioned by the West Sussex County Council and the Gatwick Diamond business association. The total number of houses in Crawley at present is around 40,000.

The study, carried out by Berkeley Hanover Consulting, predicts that the number of jobs created by a new runway plus the number of jobs created in firms attracted to the area by doubling the size of Gatwick would be far in excess of any available labour. It would require a substantial influx of workers from other parts of the UK or from the EU.

Much of Surrey is designated as Green Belt but this is already under threat where planning policies are under review. In Sussex, Crawley and Horsham are already having difficulty finding sites for a few thousand houses to meet current demand. Local councils would need to decide whether to build a whole new town or whether to add hundreds of new houses to every town and village - perhaps a thousand houses added to forty villages!

According to Brendon Sewill, chairman of GACC: 'This independent study, if correct, shows that a new runway would lead to widespread urbanisation, serious pressure on schools and hospitals, and the loss of much dearly-loved countryside. The more we find out, the more we doubt if the implications of the study were taken on board by Members of the West Sussex County Council before they took their surprise decision in July to support a new runway.' (Details below).

Sewill added: 'The Gatwick Diamond businessmen, who have been lobbying so hard to promote a new runway, also have some explaining to do. They sponsored this study so they can't now disown it. Yet it shows that their dream of making Gatwick bigger than Heathrow could turn into a nightmare.'

**GACC is the main environmental body concerned with Gatwick. Founded in 1968, we have as members nearly 100 Borough, District and Parish Councils and environmental groups covering about a twenty miles radius from the airport. Our committee, elected annually, represents all areas. Because we rely on rational argument and put forward constructive solutions we have had strong support in Parliament and at every level of government.**

## Note

The study can be found on the WSCC website at [Implications of changes to airport capacity - slides 2013](#) The housing figures are on page 17.

The West Sussex County Council vote on 19 July to support a new runway was suspect because: -

- The 'headline' results of the study were presented to Members in the form of a PowerPoint presentation in February;
- The presentation meeting was held at short notice and not all Members were able to attend;
- Members who were unable to attend, and all new Members elected in May, only received a (fairly unintelligible) print-out of the PowerPoint presentation;
- No full written report of the study was produced;
- The vote on 19 July was called at two days notice on a spurious excuse of urgency;
- The vote took place before Gatwick announced their plans;
- No briefing was provided by council officers;
- In the debate only two councillors (Bill Acraman and Brenda Smith) out of seventy expressed concern about the housing impact;
- The vote was pushed through by senior Councillors who live in the Chichester area - the part of the county least affected by Gatwick;
- Their explanation that expressing support 'in principle' puts the Council in a better position to negotiate with the airport is unconvincing.

For further information please contact

John Byng 01293 537 234

Peter Barclay 01293 862 821

**GACC is the main environmental body concerned with Gatwick. Founded in 1968, we have as members nearly 100 Borough, District and Parish Councils and environmental groups covering about a twenty miles radius from the airport. Our committee, elected annually, represents all areas. Because we rely on rational argument and put forward constructive solutions we have had strong support in Parliament and at every level of government.**