

Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign **GACC**

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Press release 4 April

Plush but bogus

The consultation published by Gatwick Airport today is described by GACC as 'plush but bogus.'

Plush because no expense has been spared in an attempt to make a new Gatwick runway look inevitable. But it makes no economic or environmental sense to build a new Gatwick runway when Stansted is not forecast to be full until the 2040s.¹

Bogus because the Airports Commission has already ruled out Option 1, the close-parallel runway. As GACC chairman, Brendon Sewill, said: 'Gatwick is inviting the public to bet on a horse that has been declared a non-runner – something that no honest bookmaker would ever do!'

GACC's objections remain as strong as ever. We will campaign vigorously against any new runway because we believe that making Gatwick larger than Heathrow today would alter the character of Surrey, Sussex and west Kent forever.

We will be examining the documents in detail and will point out any defects in the design. We note already two serious omissions –

- no maps showing future flight paths; and
- no indication of how much landing fees would need to rise to cover the cost.²

Originally Gatwick Airport said that there would be no box for people to tick if they wished to vote for no new runway. GACC protested strongly and the airport have half relented.

There is now a box labelled 'None of the above'. But it is difficult to find and somewhat confusing (it could mean a preference for some other runway location). A proper consultation would have given the public a straightforward chance to say 'No'. **As Sewill commented: 'They're frightened too many people would vote 'No new runway.'**

¹ Forecast published by Airports Commission. January 2013

² A research study by Brendon Sewill, published by the Aviation Environment, March 2014 found that the cost of a new Gatwick runway would require airport charges (landing fees etc) per passenger to rise by £50 per return flight.

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.