

Rusthall Parish Council

address to be inserted

Airports Commission

6th Floor

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

Dear Sir / Madam

DISCUSSION PAPER 7 – DELIVERY OF NEW RUNWAY CAPACITY

Rusthall Parish Council firstly apologises for the late submission of this letter, but would like to share its view on the future of Gatwick Airport and its campaign for a second runway.

The Parish Council have debated this subject a number of times and also carried out a limited survey in the village. Both the debates and the limited village survey concluded (noting that the sample size was small) that a majority of people in the village of Rusthall object to the proposal of a second runway as this would lead to an increase in the number of flights over the village and noise levels.

Rusthall is currently under one of the several flight path routes into Gatwick airport and as a result suffers from aircraft noise for long periods of time – both during the day and night. We understand that narrower flight path swathes (including one over the Langton green area) are being introduced which will intensify the problem over affected villages including ours. This situation will get considerably worse if a second runway is built.

We also understand that Gatwick Airport currently allows up to 40 night flights (between 11pm and 6am) whereas Heathrow Airport is subject to a much stricter night curfew. As a result of this lack of night curfew, Rusthall is subjected to up to these 40 night flights which is intolerable and results in loss of sleep for many residents. **We strongly recommend that the use of night flights be reduced and tapered to zero in the short to medium future irrespective of the second runway debate.** Once imposed, strict penalties should be imposed on aircraft landing during the night curfew period.

In addition the minimum height of aircraft does not seem to be monitored and results in numerous occasions when low flying aircraft fly over the village (due to pilot error or otherwise) and subjects the residents to increasing levels of noise. The current noise contour of 57 dB is set far too high – and should be lowered - as it is irrelevant (and mis-leading) to quiet villages such as Rusthall which are semi-rural with no underlying noise levels.

It is also suggested that membership to GATCOM should be amended so that elected organisations representing areas, such as Parish Councils, regularly overflowed by aircraft on final approach are invited to join.

In addition to the infrastructure to support access to and from the airport, consideration should be given to where the workforce needed to support a new runway (or airport) may live and the housing, shops and supporting infrastructure that would be needed to accommodate them.

In summary the **Rusthall Parish Council strongly oppose the proposal for a second runway at Gatwick Airport**. We hope that you will take our views into consideration when considering this proposal.

Yours faithfully

Rusthall Parish Council