

CBC Logo **Gatwick Airport Logo**

**Statement of Common Ground: January 2021
Crawley Borough Council and Gatwick Airport Limited**

Signatories:

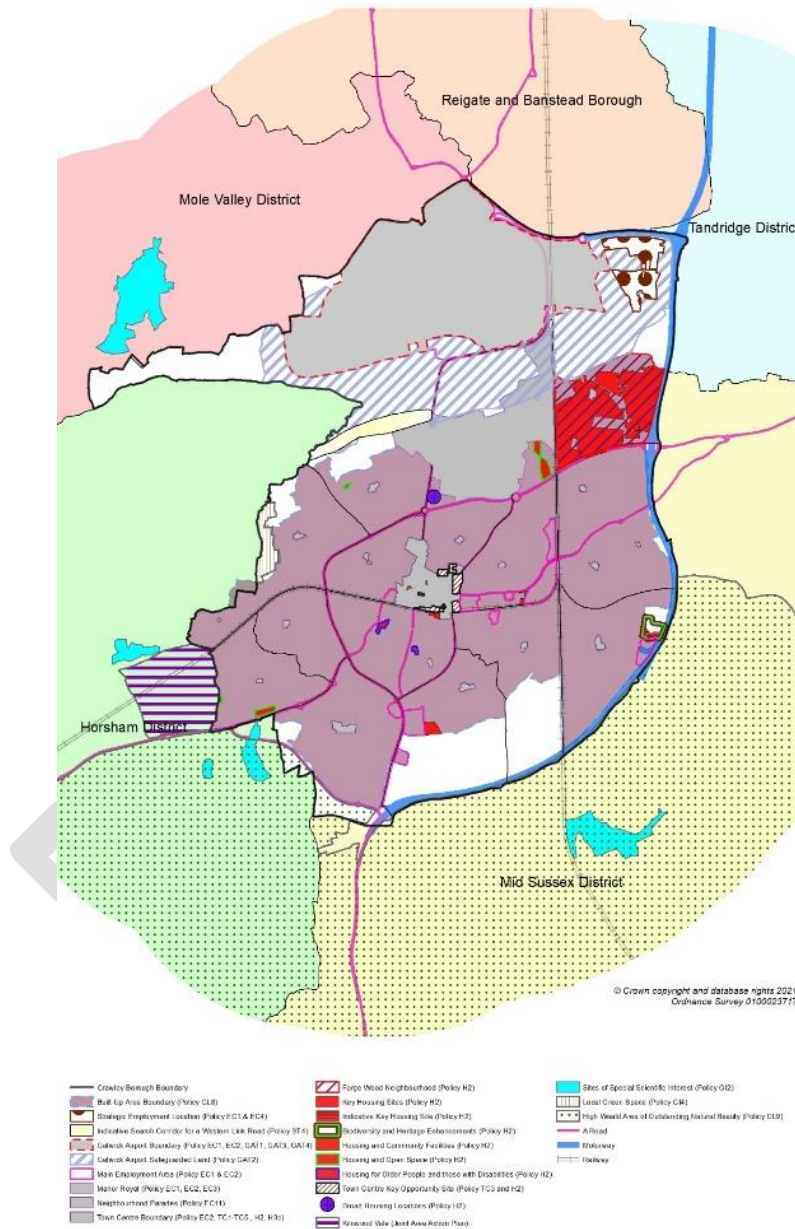
**Crawley Borough Council
Councillor Peter Smith
Cabinet Member for Planning
and Economic Development**

**Gatwick Airport Limited
Tim Norwood
Chief Planning Officer**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Gatwick Airport lies within the northern part of the borough of Crawley and has a major impact on both the economy and the environment of the borough. The presence of the airport delivers significant economic benefits to Crawley and the wider sub-region, though there are also specific planning issues related to the airport which need to be addressed by local planning policies.

Figure 1: Crawley Local Plan Key Diagram



1.2 As the Airport is a key strategic matter for the Local Plan, Crawley Borough Council (the council) and Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) have together prepared a Statement of Common Ground (SCG) to outline

key areas of agreement between them in relation to the Local Plan in order to assist consideration of the Gatwick Airport related policies through the Examination process. It also identifies areas which have not been agreed. This SCG is without prejudice to any detailed representations Gatwick Airport may also wish to make. Topic Paper 2: Gatwick Airport, and other relevant Topic Papers referenced below, provide detailed explanations of the council's policies and justification for the approach taken.

2. Polices covered in this Statement of Common Ground

2.1 The Draft Crawley Borough Local Plan 2021 – 2037 includes four specific policies relating to Gatwick Airport:

GAT1: Development of the Airport with a Single Runway

GAT2: Safeguarded Land

GAT3: Gatwick Airport Related Parking

GAT4: Employment Uses at Gatwick

2.2 Other strategic policies in the Plan are also relevant to this SCG, particularly in relation to safeguarding, namely Policy EC1: Sustainable Economic Growth, Policy EC4: Strategic Employment Location, Policy EC7 Visitor Accommodation, and Policy ST4: Safeguarding of a Search Corridor for a Crawley Western Link Road.

2.3 The specific Development and Noise Policy, EP4, also addresses a key issue for the borough, relating to aviation noise contours due to the operation of the Airport.

2.4 Finally, Policy DD5, Aerodrome Safeguarding, is also covered in this SCG.

2.5 Policy GAT1: Development of the Airport with a Single Runway

2.5.1 Both parties agree Policy GAT1 provides a supportive context for the growth of the airport within the defined policy boundary as identified on the Local Plan Map. This differs from the airport boundary shown in the Gatwick Airport Master Plan (2019) which comprises land owned by the Airport operator.

2.5.2 The parties disagree on the defined boundary, and the areas of dispute are set out in GAL's March 2020 representation on the Reg. 19 Plan published in Jan 2020. The Council's justification for the Airport Boundary defined on the Local Plan Map, (Extract in Figure 2) is set out in Topic Paper 2: Gatwick Airport. GAL's Master Plan Airport Boundary is set out in Figure 3 below.

Figure 2: Local Plan Gatwick Airport Boundary and Safeguarded Land

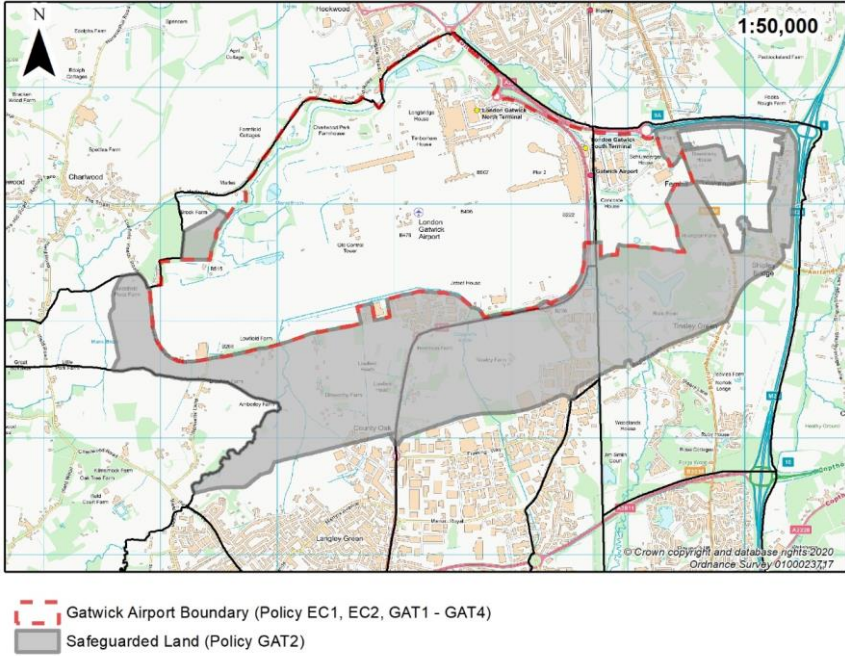
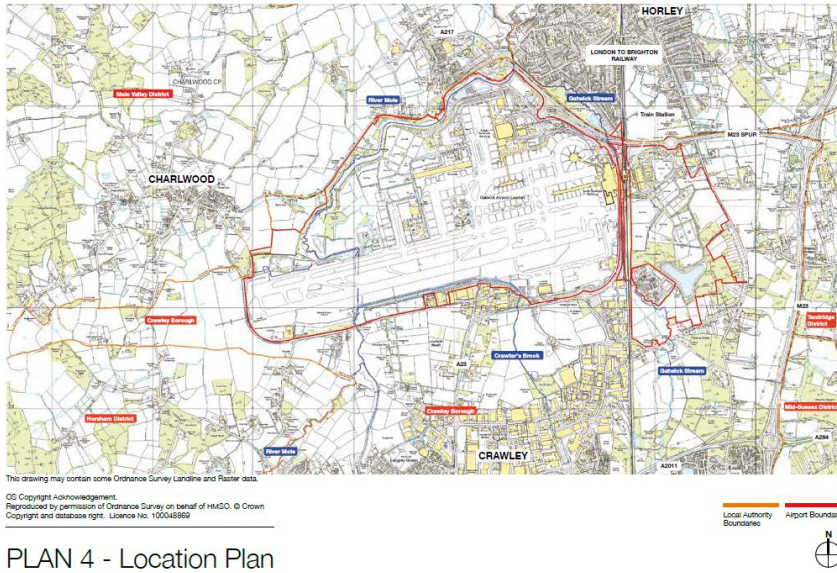


Figure 3: Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2019 Airport Boundary

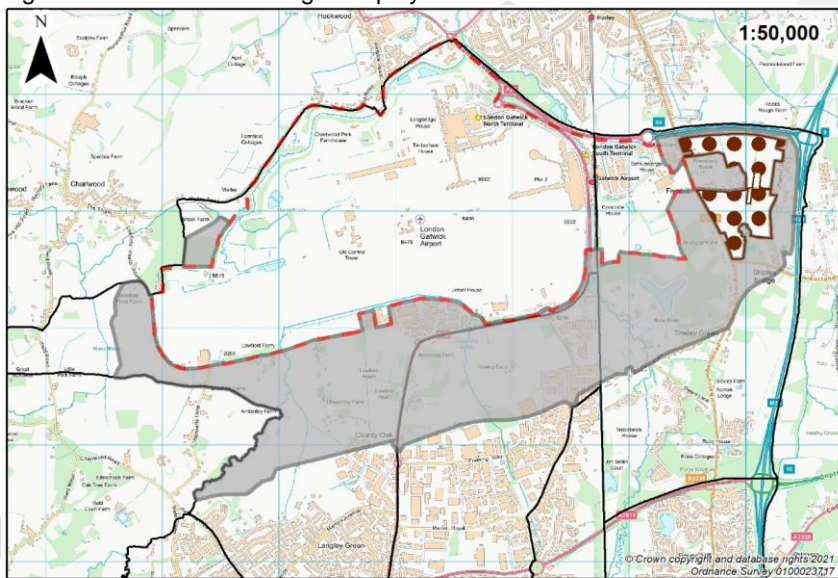


- 2.5.3 The parties agree with the identified operational uses, and directly related uses set out in Local Plan para.10.15 . The parties disagree on elements of the detailed wording of Policy GAT1, as outlined in GAL's representations (March 2020).
- 2.5.4 The parties agree to maintain an up to date S106 Agreement governing specific aspects of the operation of the airport to ensure that, as the airport grows, measures are in place to minimise its short and longer-term environmental impacts, and to enhance the benefits for the local communities it serves and affects.
- 2.6 **Policy GAT2: Safeguarded Land and Policies EC1 /EC4: Strategic Employment Location**
- 2.6.1 Both parties agree that that land is required to continue to be safeguarded at Gatwick Airport for a potential future southern runway given the statement in the 2013 Aviation Policy Framework¹ para. 5.9 that *"land outside existing airports that may be required for airport development in the future needs to be protected against incompatible development until the Government has established any relevant policies and proposals in response to the findings of the Airport Commission"* and the statement in the draft Aviation Strategy para 3.66 (published in December 2018 after the Airports National Policy Statement) that *"It is prudent to continue with a safeguarding policy to maintain a supply of land for future national requirements and to ensure that inappropriate developments do not hinder sustainable aviation growth."* These statements provide no certainty in national policy that safeguarding at Gatwick could be removed.
- 2.6.2 The parties agree that safeguarding has a significant impact on land supply, particularly for employment uses, in a land constrained borough such as Crawley, and agree that only the minimum area of land necessary for development of a future runway should continue to be safeguarded.
- 2.6.3 The council has assessed the future need for employment land within the borough and determined that, taking account of available sites within the borough, 24.1ha of new business land is required, predominantly for B2 and B8 uses. More detailed information on the nature of this need this is set out in Topic Paper 5: Employment Needs and Land Supply (Section 4 refers).
- 2.6.4 The parties agree that land is required for business-led employment use, particularly warehousing and logistics within the borough.

¹ Aviation Policy Framework (2013) Department for Transport
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/153776/aviation-policy-framework.pdf

2.6.5 The council has carefully considered the proposals in the Gatwick Airport Masterplan 2019, Plan 20 Additional Runway, see below, and concluded that there is an area of land east of the existing Balcombe Rd which could be released from safeguarding because its future use is shown in the Masterplan only as surface car parking. The draft Crawley Borough Local Plan allocates this area for a Strategic Employment Location, continuing to safeguard land around the site to accommodate necessary road diversions for a potential future southern runway.

Figure 4: Local Plan Strategic Employment Location






-  Gatwick Airport Boundary (Policy EC1, EC2, GAT1 - GAT4)
-  Safeguarded Land (Policy GAT2)
-  Gatwick Green Strategic Employment Location (Policy EC1 & EC4)

Figure 5: Gatwick Airport Master Plan Safeguarded Land

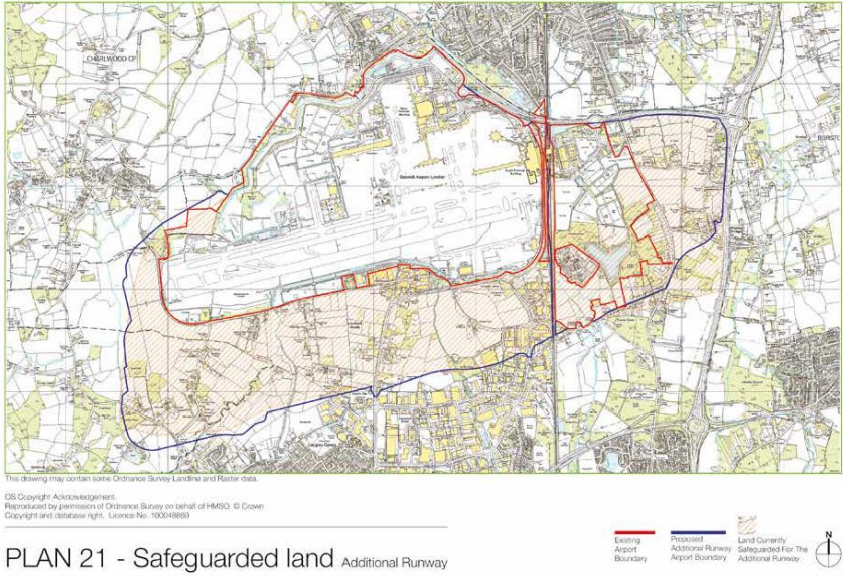
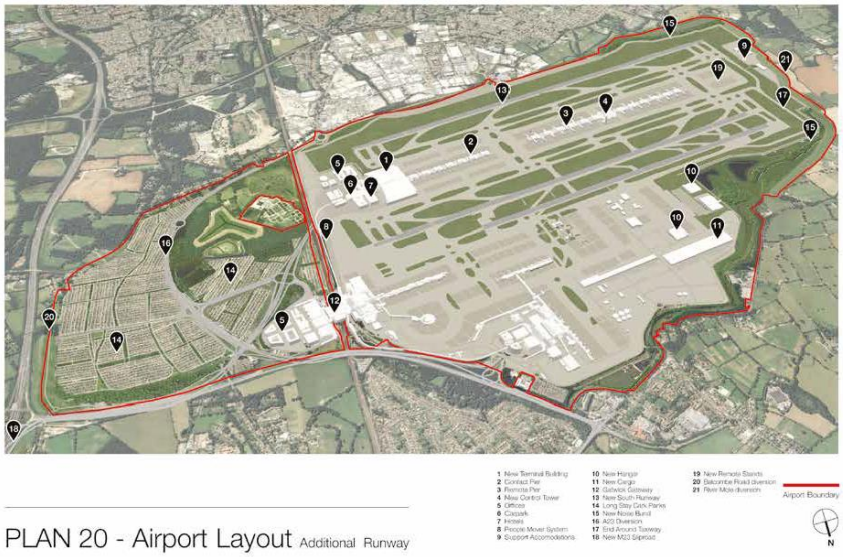


Figure 6: Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2019



2.6.6 The parties agree that this site is the only significant area of land, of a sufficient quantum to accommodate a Strategic Employment Location, which can be released from safeguarding. This is because it is not essential for the delivery of a future southern runway as future parking

needs may be lower, and/or could be accommodated in a more land efficient format such as decking or robotic parking.

2.6.7 The parties agree the principle of the allocation of the site identified in Policy EC4 for a Strategic Employment Location, subject to the requirements of the development set out in Policy EC4 and without prejudice to any detailed representation GAL may make on the requirements of Policy EC4 or the detailed boundary of the allocation.

2.6.8 In most other areas, the Local Plan safeguarding boundary follows the Master Plan boundary as the most up to date definition of the land required for a potential future southern runway. However, in some areas along the southern boundary of safeguarding, sites are now more significantly affected by safeguarding than in the adopted 2015 Local Plan and the council has sought to engage with GAL to establish if any land in these areas could be released from safeguarding to potentially enable appropriate extensions to Manor Royal and County Oak (Policy EC3 and CL8). Safeguarding in this area also affects the potential route of a Western Link Road, which Policy ST4 of the Local Plan safeguards as a Search Corridor. It is considered this road would also be essential to serve any expanded airport in the future.

Commented [LS1]: Tim, When we met, Rob said he would come back to us on whether a road is included in the Airport plans along the southern boundary of the safeguarded area

2.6.9 The parties agree there may be potential for small amendments to the southern boundary of safeguarding and agree to continue to work together to refine the boundary.

2.7 Policy GAT3: Gatwick Airport Related Parking

2.7.1 The parties agree that the most appropriate and sustainable location for airport-related parking is within the airport boundary. Any growth of airport-related car parking provision will be located on-airport (within the airport boundary) and will be permitted only where it is justified based on demonstrable need in the context of the overall strategy for increasing the proportion of non-transfer passengers using public transport. Ensuring that airport parking is provided on-airport minimises the number of trips and distance travelled by the vehicle and the passenger in travelling between the car park and the airport terminals, and allows it to be taken account of in the airport operator's Surface Access Strategy promoting more sustainable access to the airport.

2.8 Policy GAT4: Employment Uses at Gatwick

2.8.1 The parties agree with the approach of Policy GAT4, which permits the loss of airport-related employment floorspace within the airport boundary where it can be demonstrated that development will not have a detrimental impact on the long-term ability of the airport to meet the floorspace need necessary to meet the operational needs of the airport as it grows.

2.9 Policy EP4: Development and Noise

- 2.9.1 The parties agree that aircraft noise is a significant concern for some people in the local community in Crawley. They agree that the number of people significantly affected by aircraft noise should be “limited and, where possible, reduced”, in line with the Government aim set out in the Aviation Policy Framework 2013 as part of a policy of “sharing benefits of noise reduction with industry in support of sustainable development”.
- 2.9.2 The parties agree that essential noise sensitive development should be restricted in areas that are subject to unacceptable noise from existing or potential future noise sources. The parties disagree on elements of the detailed wording of Policy EP4 and the noise thresholds set out in the Noise Annex, as outlined in GAL’s representations (March 2020).
- 2.9.3 The parties agree that planning decisions should have regard to future noise impacts associated with a new southern runway at Gatwick Airport, in order to ensure that future development is not exposed to unacceptable noise. The parties agree that planning applications for noise sensitive development will be considered on the basis of the predicted noise contours associated with a possible wide-spaced southern runway at Gatwick Airport, as set out in Figure 1 of the Local Plan Noise Annex, which shows the noise contours identified in Plan 31 of the Gatwick Airport Master Plan 2019 (Air Noise Map – Additional Runway – Summer Day - 2040). Figure 1 of the Noise Annex will be updated by the council should these contours be superseded by subsequent noise contours published by Gatwick Airport and approved by the CAA. The justification for these levels is set out in the Local Plan Noise Annex and Topic Paper 8: Development and Noise.

2.10 Policy EC7: Hotel and Visitor Accommodation

- 2.10.1 The parties agree that Gatwick Airport is a sustainable location for hotel and visitor accommodation given the particular demand that the airport generates. It is agreed that hotel and visitor accommodation uses, whilst not representing an operational use, are supported at the airport provided that current and future operational needs are not compromised.

3. Timetable for review of the Statement of Common Ground and ongoing cooperation

- 3.1 This SCG relates to the draft Crawley Borough Local Plan 2021-2037, for Submission Publication Consultation in January 2021. The parties agree to continue to engage with regard to planning policies relating to the Airport, and will review and update this document, as necessary, once the representations received during the second Regulation 19

consultation have been considered by the Council, prior to Examination.

- 3.2 Gatwick Airport is preparing a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to bring its Northern Runway into use. In December 2018, at a meeting of its Full Council, the Borough Council voted to oppose Qu.1 in the Master Plan *“Given the contents of the Master Plan, to what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the principle of growing Gatwick by making best use of the existing runways in line with Government policy.”* However, the council wishes to continue to engage with Gatwick Airport with a view to understanding more fully the environmental impacts of the Northern Runway project, together with the increasing use of the existing main runway, and how they are to be minimised and mitigated. The council recognises that Gatwick Airport believes the Northern Runway project should bring significant benefits for the local economy and therefore the council wishes to receive more detailed information from the Airport about how the Airport considers such future economic and employment benefits can be maximised in the local area, to benefit Crawley residents, should the Northern Runway project go ahead.
- 3.3 The parties agree to work together on a Statement of Common Ground related to the Northern Runway project. The parties also agree to work together to draw up of a series of proposed conditions, requirements and planning obligations which will govern the operation of the airport as a whole (both the main and Northern Runway). The council will also work with West Sussex County Council and other neighbouring authorities on this project, with a view to preparing joint responses to the DCO as far as possible.