

## **8G GATWICK AREA**

### **8Gi Role and Economy**

#### **8Gi.1 What is the rationale for and role of this sub-region, having regard to its geography and functional relationships?**

1. The rationale for the sub-region is unclear and illogical. The area includes a disparate number of towns with no obvious links and does not reflect the working patterns of residents. The existing road and rail links are poor and already at capacity. Huge investment will be required if there is to be additional growth in the region. The main population and airport are located in the north of the sub-region with the southerly towns of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill separated from those in the north by large tracks of protected countryside (the High Weald AONB). By including such a large area of countryside in the sub-region, the protection of the countryside has been side lined.

2. Burgess Hill, Horsham, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead face different problems to those in the Sussex Coast Sub-Region, but equally do not face the same problems as Gatwick and Crawley. There is no logical reason to shoe-horn them into the sub-region simply because of their proximity to Gatwick. These and the other smaller towns and villages in the sub-region have their own micro-economies but their main function is as dormitories for London, Gatwick, Crawley, Brighton and Worthing. They are very different and should be recognised as such and we suggest that they should not be included in a Gatwick – Crawley - Horley conurbation.

3. CPRE strongly objects to the creation of a second runway at Gatwick and we do not believe, even if it went ahead, that it would result in significant additional employment in the area. CPRE Sussex therefore questions the level of demand for additional housing at the proposed level.

4. The limits to growth within the sub-region are many and complex: the ring fencing of land associated with the second runway at Gatwick, together with the restrictions on development due to the noise footprint. Strategic Gaps between the Mid Sussex towns and the band of AONB dissecting the Sub-region and on the southerly border (South Downs AONB), all place physical restrictions on potential growth.

#### **8Gi.2 Is the sub-regional strategy an appropriate response to the economic potential and the social and environmental attributes of the area?**

5. No. There is insufficient emphasis on the protection of the environment and too much weight is given to economic growth in an area of low unemployment. Much of the sub-region falls within the High Weald AONB and the south of the region borders the South Downs AONB/ National Park, to which national and regional policies apply. The protection of the countryside in an area close to London is essential to ensure its sustainability for future generations, and must not be undermined by development policy that appears to undermine national and regional policy.

**8Gi.2 Is the sub-regional strategy an appropriate response to the economic potential and the social and environmental attributes of the area? (cont'd)**

6. We wish to see direct reference to the sequential approach to development included in the plan, to ensure greenfield sites are only used a last resort. The decision making process by which a greenfield site is finally approved should be transparent.

7. We support the development of “smart” growth but are concerned that the majority of the available workforce in Crawley, the principal employment centre, are unskilled and may be unsuited to higher value jobs, without significant investment in skills training We therefore highlight the importance of GAT4 i.

8. The environmental constraints place severe restrictions on potential development across much of the Sub-Region (ref 8Gi.1). Although the Plan recognises the diversity and value of the various small rural settlements in the sub-region the means to ensure these areas are protected needs to be emphasised in this policy .

**8Gi.3 Is Policy GAT4 sufficient to guide LPAs and other stakeholders on the steps that should be taken to foster the future development of the sub-regional economy?**

9. We support Policy GAT4 iii with reference to “provision of high quality micro-businesses” in which small local business may be encouraged to flourish within existing centres and suit the needs of smaller rural settlements. However because sub- regional spatial policy does not include detail on the type of businesses to be targeted, there is a policy gap on the infrastructure specifics that would follow.

**8Gi.4 Does the proposed strategy adequately reflect the role and potential of Crawley, including the role of Gatwick Airport as an economic driver?**

10. Too much importance is being placed on Gatwick Airport as the economic driver for the area. Para 2.12 refers to a wider portfolio of activity – pharmaceuticals, financial services etc- but the name and emphasis of the subregion is too Gatwick Airport focused at a time when the future of air travel is uncertain and there is mounting evidence that the growth of this industry is unsustainable.

11. Recent expansion in “no frills” airlines has made flying more accessible. However the employment rates associated with this discount travel are drastically less than traditional airlines. The Friends of the Earth document “Pie in the Sky”<sup>1</sup> notes comparative estimates of jobs per million passengers (per mppa) for British Airways 1320 jobs/mppa, compared to Ryanair 86 jobs/mppa and Easyjet 106 jobs/mppa. Therefore even continued expansion in this sector does not necessarily correlate with significant employment opportunities.

**8Gi.4 Does the proposed strategy adequately reflect the role and potential of Crawley, including the role of Gatwick Airport as an economic driver? (cont'd)**

12. In June 2006 the Government drastically reduced quotas for night flight movements and noise at Gatwick<sup>2</sup>. The revised figures for 2011-12 represent a reduction in the movements quota of some 12% and noise quota of 47% compared to the 2005-06 figures. With increasing pressure to pay the real cost of flying CPRE Sussex believe the continued expansion of flights at Gatwick can not be relied upon to provide significant employment.

13. Little reference is made to the potential of Crawley as a centre for employment and careful development. The proposed strategy should include consideration of an objective to diversify away from aviation to create a more balanced sub-region and to reduce reliance on this sector.

CPRE Sussex  
January 2007

**References**

- 1 *Pie in the sky* – Why the costs of airport expansion outweigh the benefits. Friends of the Earth September 2006
- 2 *Night flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stanstead* Department of Transport (DfT) June 2006  
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- 3 *Future of Air transport* – progress report 14 Dec 2006
- 4 *Mid Sussex District Council - Annual Monitoring Report 2005-06*  
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