

# Second runway at Gatwick would be “disaster for the climate”, Green Party warns



9 September 2021

- **Party has calculated expansion could result in an extra 1.5 million tonnes of carbon each year**

The Green Party has warned a second runway at Gatwick would be a disaster for the climate and could result in an extra 1.5 million tonnes of carbon emitted each year [1], ahead of a public consultation on the airport's expansion plans.

Councillors and members from the South East Green Party met with a former Gatwick-based pilot Todd Smith when they launched their campaign against the plans on the eve of the consultation on Wednesday.

Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, said:

“Converting Gatwick's emergency runway to support even more flights is completely incompatible with the UK's climate targets. The Government should be looking to ways of driving down aviation demand, not facilitating it.

“More flights at Gatwick will cause more noise, pollution and road congestion and undermine what few efforts there are to put us on the path to net zero emissions.”

Surrey Green Party Councillor Jonathan Essex has calculated that the planned expansion at Gatwick will increase emissions by more than 1.5 million tonnes of carbon a year.

Councillor Essex said:

“Converting Gatwick's emergency runway to support even more flights would be a disaster for the climate. The fact that these plans have even been put forward implies that the government just reflects business interests rather than providing leadership on the climate.

“We need a Green New Deal plan to decarbonise every home and journey locally, not a further increase in the noise, pollution, congestion and pressures of Gatwick, whose climate impact already dwarfs that of its surrounding area.”

Todd Smith, 32, former Gatwick-based pilot and co-founder of environmental group Safe Landing [2], said:

“Airport expansion at Gatwick or any other UK airport is in direct conflict with the need for climate leadership and contradicts the advice from the

government's independent Climate Change Committee.

"It's about time we had a grown up conversation regarding aviation's role in this emergency and how we can support highly skilled workers' transition towards the essential low carbon jobs of the future."

ENDS

## Notes

### 1

This is calculated by applying the increase in carbon emissions set out by the UK Department for Transport (DfT) for 2016 up to 2028 for the proposed second runway using Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) figures.

- Estimate of 4.5 million tonnes CO2 from Gatwick in 2016 (DfT (2017) UK Aviation Forecasts.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/878705/uk-aviation-forecasts-2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878705/uk-aviation-forecasts-2017.pdf) (p146)
- Increase for 2017 based on CAA data to 283,000 Air Transport Movements from Gatwick  
([https://www.caa.co.uk/uploadedFiles/CAA/Content/Standard\\_Content/Data\\_and\\_analysis/Datasets/Airport\\_stats/Airport\\_data\\_2017\\_annual/Table\\_03\\_1\\_Aircraft\\_Movements.pdf](https://www.caa.co.uk/uploadedFiles/CAA/Content/Standard_Content/Data_and_analysis/Datasets/Airport_stats/Airport_data_2017_annual/Table_03_1_Aircraft_Movements.pdf))
- Applying uplift from 2017 to 2028 of 32% calculated by GAL during the Landing and Take-off Cycle (LT0) cycle of using the Northern emergency runway as a second runway  
<https://www.gatwickairport.com/globalassets/business-community/growing-gatwick/master-plan-2019/gatwick-master-plan-2019.pdf> (Figure 5.8).

### 2

Safe Landing is a group of eco-conscious aviation workers campaigning for long term sustainable jobs and a sector governed by the realities of climate science: <https://safe-landing.org/>

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