

# Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

## News Release

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### **Royal Borough submits response to Airports Commission consultation**

The council has submitted its response to the Airports Commission regarding its long-term capacity consultation by reaffirming its position that it is against expansion at Heathrow Airport.

The Royal Borough supports the Gatwick option on economic grounds.

The Airports Commission is currently looking at three proposals:

- from Gatwick Airport Ltd for an additional runway to the south of the existing runway at Gatwick
- from Heathrow Airport Ltd for an additional runway to the north west of the existing northern runway at Heathrow
- from Heathrow Hub Ltd for an extension to the existing northern runway at Heathrow to operate as two separate runways.

Cllr George Bathurst, chairman of the aviation forum and cabinet member for policy and performance, said: “We are backing Gatwick expansion for the stronger economic growth it would create. It is more practical, more politically deliverable and will give our residents and the UK more choice and competition. We want to see Heathrow as a better, not a bigger airport.

“We urge the government and the Airports Commission to take into account the unacceptable noise our residents already suffer, particularly at night, and that if Heathrow was allowed to expand this would get dramatically worse.

“Our recent poll shows that residents support our views and we will continue to support expansion at Gatwick.

“There is a massive threat to our Green Belt as the Heathrow options would create a need for further development and result in approximately 70,000 homes being built in the surrounding area. As a result, both Heathrow expansion options would cause substantial harm to our community.

“There would also be substantial harm to our world-famous heritage including Windsor Castle and Eton College, ironically destroying one of the reasons that many people visit the UK.”

The Royal Borough recently carried out a poll with its residents which showed that 50 percent support the building of a new runway at Gatwick.

The poll also showed that 31 percent of residents oppose (strongly oppose or tend to oppose) both options for Heathrow expansion. This compares to 22 percent in favour.

Almost six in 10 (58 percent) residents believe the number of flights at Heathrow should remain the same as currently.

The poll shows that 50 percent of residents support the building of a new runway at Gatwick with only 14 percent against expanding Gatwick, putting net support of the scheme at 35 percent.

A quota sample of 1,014 residents, aged 18 and over, were surveyed in the poll which took place by telephone between 8 and 11 January 2015. Survey data were weighted back to the true population proportions. The poll asked residents across the borough, not just those currently affected by Heathrow.

The Airports Commission (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/airports-commission>) requests that all submissions were received yesterday, but will not be putting forward their recommendation before central government until at least this summer.

The council continues to encourage residents to complain every time that they are disturbed by noise via Heathrow's online reporting facility <http://www.heathrowairport.com/noise/what-you-can-do/make-a-complaint-about-noise>, by email at [noise\\_complaints@heathrow.com](mailto:noise_complaints@heathrow.com) or by telephone on 0800 344 844.

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