

Date: 19 June 2023
Our Ref: 15849a



DWD

6 New Bridge Street
London EC4V 6AB

T: 020 7489 0213
F: 020 7248 4743
E: info@dwdllp.com
W: dwdllp.com

Strategic Planning
Town Hall
The Boulevard
Crawley
RH10 1UZ

Sent via email: strategic.planning@ Crawley.gov.uk

CRAWLEY LOCAL PLAN REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION 2023

REPRESENTATION SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF AIRPORT INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY UNIT TRUST ('AIPUT')

Please accept this as a formal response by AIPUT to the Consultation on the Crawley Submission draft Local Plan, which began on 9 May 2023.

Introduction to AIPUT

AIPUT is a long-term active investor-stakeholder at and in near proximity to major UK gateway airports, with real assets under management representing almost £700m as at Q1 2023. Today, AIPUT is an award-winning specialist owner, manager and developer of in excess of 2.5 million square feet of high quality industrial, warehouse and logistics accommodation at three major London airports. AIPUT is managed by Tritax Management LLP, a specialist logistics asset management group with both a local and European outlook.

AIPUT's London airport industrial, warehouse and logistics portfolio has an investment occupancy of around 95%, together with a land bank approaching 100 acres.

The portfolio performs a crucial role for the nation and at a local level supporting the needs of small and large sized businesses providing our customers with a conduit to:

- Provide goods and services to airports, their stakeholders and their customers.
- Safely and efficiently transport passengers, time critical goods and services all over the world.
- Provide a range of goods and logistical services to the high consuming local populations within these airport city ecosystems that are benefiting from the airport and its related infrastructure connectivity.

AIPUT is a market leader in its field, one of the largest landlords of aviation related industrial, warehouse and logistics facilities on and around the UK's airports. This, combined with our aspiration to grow our portfolio and further support the functions of the airports and their economic ecosystems, means that we have significant interest in their future success and the spread of that economic benefit to the local communities and throughout London and the UK.

AIPUT's property portfolio at and in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport ('the Airport') comprises:



- Viking House – Located within the Airport boundary and currently occupied by Gate Gourmet. This warehouse is within the draft boundary of the Northern Runway Development Consent Order (as shown in the Gatwick Airport Limited ('GAL') Summer 2022 Consultation);
- Gatwick Gate Estate – Located to the south of the Airport adjacent to its southern boundary. This four-unit Estate is occupied by World Duty Free;
- The Fleming Business Centre – Located to the south of the Airport within the Manor Royal Industrial Estate. This seven-unit estate is occupied by a range of occupiers.
- Tesla Crawley Base – Located to the south of the airport. Recently acquired, this warehouse is occupied by Tesla.

AIPUT's aspiration is to grow its portfolio at and around Gatwick Airport and further support the Airport's function, appeal and success. AIPUT is matching its ambition with action; the Trust has invested approaching £30 million increasing its ownership of real assets in close proximity to the Airport to date in 2021 and 2022. AIPUT is now one of the top 5 leading owners of industrial real estate assets in and around Gatwick Airport, representing nearly 300,000 sq ft of space and upwards of c. £50m by value.

Crawley Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation 2023

The submission draft Local Plan includes amendments and clarifications to the suite of airport-related policies as the adopted Local Plan 2015.

AIPUT has reviewed the submission draft Local Plan and accompanying key documents and has identified the following, of particular relevance:

- The draft Local Plan retains safeguarding for a potential future southern runway but also challenges the level of safeguarding required in order to enable the employment needs of the borough to be addressed. The Local Plan safeguarded boundary has not included all the land east of the Balcombe Road which is shown in the GAL Master Plan as being utilised for a large area of surface car parking. Given the constrained land supply within the borough and its significant employment and housing needs, the council does not consider surface parking to represent an efficient use of land. Instead, this Site has been allocated as the Gatwick Green Strategic Employment Location. However, it is also noted that the north of Manor Royal has been safeguarded to reflect the GAL masterplan boundary.
- One of AIPUT's assets, Viking House, is included within the 'Gatwick Airport Boundary'. Topic Paper 2 (Gatwick Airport) states that only land that the council considers 'necessary' is included within this boundary. Furthermore, it is noted that the airport boundary has been "*drawn as tightly as considered appropriate*" due to the implications of land use, particularly in relation to on-airport parking and policy GAT3.
- An area of search for the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link is described in Policy ST4 while Policy GAT3 continues to control airport related parking.
- Flexibility for non-airport related employment uses on airport, including hotels, is provided in the Plan, whilst ensuring that development will not have a detrimental impact on the long-term ability of the airport to meet its operational needs as it grows.
- A new Aerodrome Safeguarding policy, also covering the Public Safety Zones, has been added to the Local Plan.

AIPUT is responding to this consultation under a number of themes, which are denoted using subheadings.

Safeguarding

AIPUT is supportive of the definition of ‘small scale development’ in paragraph 10.19 in relation to Policy GAT2 which would allow for the updating or refurbishing of buildings. This is because there is a reasonable need to invest in enhancements or redevelopment of individual existing buildings when they come to the end of their functional and/or economic life to provide new facilities that modern incoming occupiers require.

However AIPUT has a background concern with the continued restriction that safeguarding places on the ability to invest in and redevelop existing properties and ‘brownfield’ land within the safeguarded zone. Topic Paper 1 (Unmet Needs and Duty to Cooperate) identifies that the adopted local plan acknowledges the restrictions on land for further development as a result of airport safeguarding.

With respect to the Northern Runway proposals, in the case that a development consent order is granted, there is likely a need for expansion of safeguarded area and further safeguarded land as late as 2038, which would be over two decades of restrictive safeguarding on near airport land. Yet due to unclear wording in paragraph 10.19, the allowance for updating, refurbishment, or replacement with a modern building of comparable scale, appears limited. This would pose a significant risk for property and land within safeguarded areas to become blighted and at the least simply fail to provide the level of quality and functionality needed for the safe and efficient operation of the expanded airport. This also is not appropriate in the context of Net Zero 2050 legislation and the aims of Policy SDC1 which seeks improved energy/resource usage and reduced carbon intensity of the borough’s building stock. We therefore request the following additional wording in paragraph 10.19 (in underline) for reasons of clarity and soundness:

For the purpose of policy interpretation small-scale development includes development such as residential extensions, updating, ~~or~~ refurbishment or replacement at similar scale of buildings where compatible with Policy SDC1, some changes of use, or other minor development. Incompatible development within safeguarded land is regarded as development which would add built or environmental constraints or significantly increase the costs or complexity of the development or operation of an additional runway. The airport operator will be consulted on all applications within the safeguarded area for a second runway.

Topic Paper 5 (Employment Needs and Land Supply) acknowledges the role of airport safeguarding as a land supply constraint and therefore rejects the use of Gatwick Green land as airport parking as outlined in the GAL Masterplan. However, AIPUT notes that the expansion of the safeguarding area into the northern area of Manor Royal, Land at Fernlands and outlined in the GAL masterplan has been reflected in the draft submission Local Plan. AIPUT recognises that extensions to Manor Royal will continue to be significantly restricted by safeguarded land.

Gatwick Airport Boundary

AIPUT recognise Viking House remains within the airport boundary in the Local Plan which is considered appropriate in planning and land use terms.

AIPUT has lodged enquiries with GAL as to why Viking House is also included in the draft Order Limits for the Northern Runway DCO Application, and has received notification that the land or rights over the land could potentially be compulsorily acquired by GAL. There is no apparent case or need for its

inclusion in the DCO Application since none of the plans in the Summer 2022 GAL DCO consultation show works here. In principle an application for compulsory acquisition powers would not have justification. AIPUT is best placed to renew and update its asset to ensure it continues to serve current and future airport needs, and this underlines the need for the requested amendments to Policy GAT2 set out above.

Policy GAT4 provides for 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 its operational needs. It is recognised in the reasoned justification that recent years have seen an increasing level of vacant office within the airport, largely due to the changing needs of airlines and businesses alike. AIPUT endorse this, with changes including new ways of working (such as the rise of remote working), temporary changes to passenger demand, and evolving occupier requirements. This suggests that GAT4 should not be predicated upon long term predictions of airport operational needs or airport growth, since doing so may inadvertently fail to provide for more immediate general employment floorspace needs that are appropriate in all other respects.

The following amendments to GAT4 are proposed:

“New non-airport related employment floorspace within the airport boundary will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- i. this will not have a detrimental effect on the ~~long term~~ ability of the airport to meet its immediately foreseeable land and floorspace requirements ~~necessary to meet the needs of the airport as it grows~~; and*
- ii. it will not have an unacceptable impact on the role and function of the other Main Employment Areas within Crawley borough and town centres and employment areas beyond Crawley’s boundaries.”*

Water Neutrality

The AIPUT Sites and Gatwick Airport are located outside the Sussex North Water Resource Zone and the Upper Beeding Water Resources Zone hence any future planning applications here are not expected to require a Water Neutrality Statement under Policy SDC4 (Water Neutrality).

Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link

AIPUT welcomes the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport link to address the predicted increase in travel movements generate by the development of a second runway. AIPUT has reviewed policy ST4 (Area of Search for a Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport Link) and the area of search for the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Transport link and is content with the interim search and search proposals. Policy ST4 requires that the design and route of the Western Multi-Modal Transport Link must take account of:

- existing properties which could be affected by the final route;
- residential and commercial properties close to the final route;
- the flood plain;
- the rural landscape;
- local biodiversity;
- sports pitch provision and recreation facilities; and

- heritage and heritage landscape assets and visual intrusion.

AIPUT therefore expect to be consulted on forthcoming design and route proposals ahead of any planning or compulsory purchase order applications.

Environmental and Sustainability Policies

Policy GI3 requires at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain and outlines the requirements for urban development that is unable to meet the needs on Site. The policy changes to reflect forthcoming mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain enforced by the Environment Act 2021 seem appropriate. Policies SDC1 and SDC3 provide appropriate support for low carbon, energy efficient, water efficient and sustainable development. The recognition of embodied carbon in Policy SDC1 could be supplanted with specific support for refurbishment and refit where appropriate in overall sustainability terms.

Closing Remarks

AIPUT requests to be kept updated on the progress of the Local Plan and may register to participate in the examination in public in due course.

Please can you confirm receipt by contacting Colin Turnbull at this office (colin.turnbull@dwdllp.com).

Yours faithfully,



DWD
For and on behalf of AIPUT