

HANDLING AIRCRAFT NOISE IN LOCAL PLANS: A VIEW FROM CRAWLEY

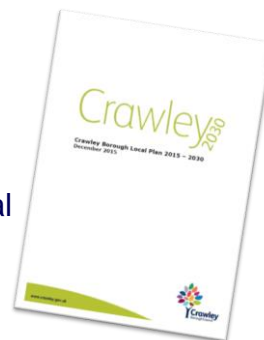
28 APRIL 2016

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Local Plan Policy Overview

- Local Plan Adopted December 2015
- Includes a bespoke noise policy underpinned by specific noise standards
- Approach endorsed by Inspector at Local Plan Examination
- Addresses policy vacuum left by revocation of PPG24 by locally defining Unacceptable Adverse Effect level.
- Prevents noise sensitive development beyond the 66dB contour.



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Crawley Background

- Population: 106,600 (2011 census)
- Tight administrative boundary as town is bounded by Gatwick Airport to the north, M23 to the east and High Weald AONB to the south.
- Situated at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond Local Enterprise Partnership area.
- Significant housing need of 10,000 new homes up to 2030, but limited available land supply means only 5,000 can be planned for.



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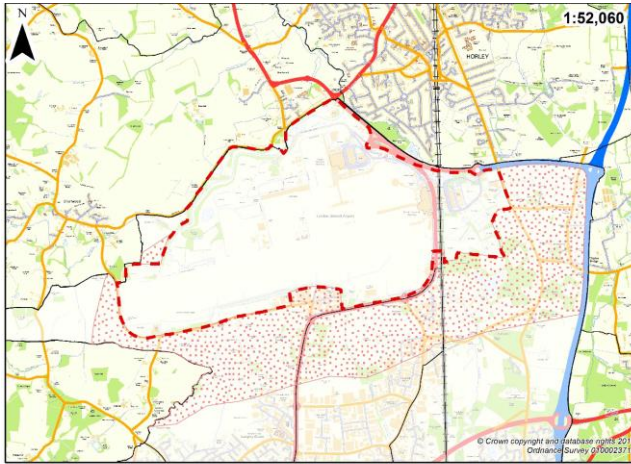
Gatwick Airport

- Gatwick Airport is situated within Crawley Borough
- A key employer: directly as a result of airport based jobs, and indirectly through airport associated industries such as catering, logistics and hospitality.
- Local Plan supports growth of the Airport up to 45 million passengers per annum, based on its current 1-runway, 2-terminal configuration.
- Local Plan safeguards land to the south of the Airport (north of Manor Royal Business District) to accommodate a possible second runway (pending a Government decision).



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Gatwick Airport Safeguarding



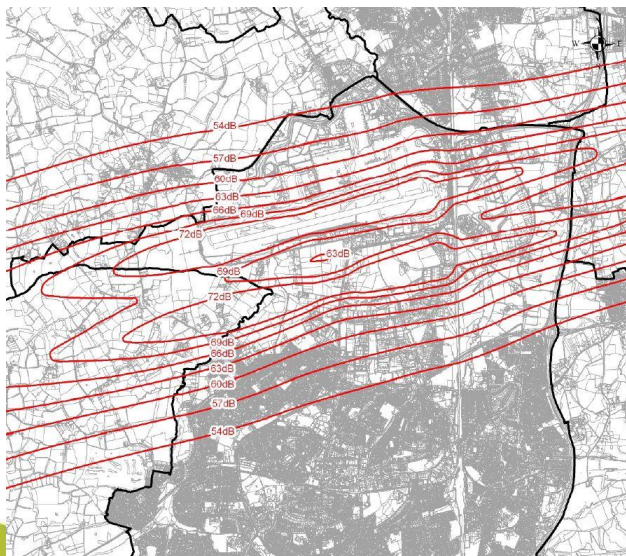
- Gatwick Airport Boundary (Policy EC2, GAT1, GAT3, & GAT4)
- Gatwick Safeguarded Land (Policy GAT2)

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Gatwick Airport Noise Contour (2 runway scenario)

- Crawley's constrained urban area means that much of its available land supply is affected by noise from air transport.
- Important to ensure that future residents are not exposed to unacceptable impacts from aircraft noise.
- Local Plan therefore has regard to potential future noise exposure (CAA 2003, ERCD Report 0308)



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Why Introduce a Local Policy?

- Crawley is home to Britain's largest single-runway airport, major employment at Manor Royal, and the M23 motorway. Noise is therefore an important planning consideration in the town.
- NPPF Para 109: *'prevent new and existing development from contributing to or being put at risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of pollution'*.
- NPPF Para 123: *'avoid noise from giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health or quality of life as a result of new development'*.

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Why Introduce a Local Policy?

- Revocation of PPG24 (Planning and Noise) resulted in absence of detailed technical guidance at national level.
- NPPF signposts Explanatory Note of the Noise Policy for England. This refers to the Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (level of noise exposure above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur), but does not define this in numeric terms.
- Creates uncertainty when managing the relationship between development and noise.

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Why Introduce a Local Policy?

- *Planning Practice Guidance: Noise* (DCLG, 2013)
- Local authorities should take account of the acoustic environment in plan making and decision taking.
- Includes consideration of whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur.
- Para 10: *'Local planning authorities working with local communities and business may decide to develop and include in their Local Plans specific standards to apply to various forms of proposed development and locations in their area'*.

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Local Plan Policy ENV11: Development and Noise

- Aims to control and, where possible, reduce people's exposure to noise.
- Sets out policy requirements for Noise Sensitive Development and Noise Generating Development.
- Sets out a policy requirement that where noise exposure is significant, appropriate mitigation will be implemented through careful planning, layout and design, to ensure that noise impact for future users is acceptable.
- For transport sources, identifies the Unacceptable Adverse Effect to occur where noise exposure is above 66dB.

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Local Plan Policy ENV11: Development and Noise

- Policy cross refers to the Local Plan Noise Annex which details locally specific technical noise standards.
- Noise Annex forms part of the Local Plan (rather than standalone evidence base) so has been subject to scrutiny at examination.
- This gives it greater weight than an SPD of evidence base document

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Local Plan Inspector's Report

'Detailed technical guidance on the application of policy ENV11 is provided in the Noise Annex at the end of the Plan. In terms of transport noise, the Council points to evidence that suggests that unacceptable adverse effects on health could occur at a threshold of 66dB, a figure that was supported in the Secretary of State's decision on the North East Sector development (now Forge Wood).

*Despite this, a figure of 69dB was included in the Noise Annex to allow for the possibility of infill development in existing high noise locations. There was no evidence to justify a figure above the 66dB threshold, and **the fact that some existing dwellings may be exposed (either now or in future) to higher levels is not sufficient reason to add to them**.*

(Martin Pike, Planning Inspector, 2015)

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Identifying a Policy Approach

- Working with Environmental Health is key!
- Feedback from stakeholders: Council met with Gatwick Airport and maintained a dialogue.
- Recognising contrasting thresholds: Airport operators keen to limit number of dwellings inside 57dB contour, but PPG24 allowed noise sensitive development up to 72dB in some cases.
- Taking account of local circumstances, including North East Sector Planning Appeal



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Creating our own policy

- With the loss of PPG24 and the experience gained from the two public inquiries. We wanted a robust policy we could defend further developments.
- *Our main concern was infill development between the northern boundary of the NE Sector and the southern boundary of the safeguarded area (the future airport boundary).*
- *This whole area is between the 66 & 69dB contour and would be an extension of the 'major noise sensitive development'. However with the current policy vacuum we would struggle to stop it.*

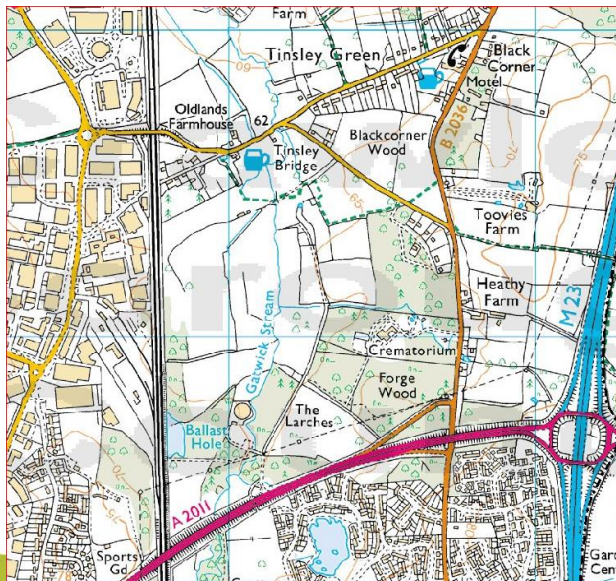


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Creating our own policy

- *PPG24 had previously allowed developments up to 72dBA (NEC C).*
- *Under aviation noise PPG24 stated: Recommended noise exposure categories for new dwellings exposed to aircraft noise are given in Annex 1, but 60 Leq dB(A) should be regarded as a desirable upper limit for major new noise-sensitive development.*
- *We had two Public Enquiries for the North East Sector which wanted to develop up to the predicted 66dB contour for the proposed Second Runway. Having one the first one we lost the second, mainly because of 'housing need'.*

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Creating our own standards

- The inspector for the NE Sector had stated: *"...60% of the population would be living in a noise environment which, although undesirable according to PPG24, is not unacceptable."* We would that this suggests that beyond that point would be unacceptable. (N.B. 60% are inside the 60dB contour).
- As he had set the 66dBA contour as a benchmark for 'major noise sensitive developments' then it would be appropriate to set that as our upper limit for development. As even small developments inside the 66dBA contour would ultimately be extending the 'major noise sensitive development' beyond the inspectors limit.

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Creating our own standards

- To get through a Local Plan Examination we needed to create an evidence base to support our proposals.
- There is plenty of evidence of the health impacts of noise and this has usefully been summarised by both the HPA (*Environmental Noise and Health in the UK: 2010*) and the Airports Commission (*Discussion Paper 5: Aviation Noise (2013)*). There was also a document released by Defra which tried to place a financial cost to noise. *Estimating Dose-Response Relationships between Noise Exposure and Human Health Impacts in the UK*.
- See *Technical Noise Annex*



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Noise Annex Table

	Examples of Outcomes	Daytime (07:00 – 23:00) Threshold	Night time (23:00 – 07:00) Threshold
No Observed Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL)	Noticeable but not intrusive: Noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour or attitude. Can slightly affect the acoustic character of the area, but not such that there is a perceived change in the quality of life.	<45dB L _{Aeq,1hr} <70dB L _{Amax} (1)	<40dB L _{Aeq,8hr} <55dB L _{Amax} (1)
Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL)		45dB L _{Aeq,1hr} 70dB L _{Amax} (1)	40dB L _{Aeq,8hr} 55dB L _{Amax} (1)
Observed Effect Level	Noticeable and intrusive: Noise can be heard and causes small changes in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. turning up volume of television, speaking more loudly, closing windows some of the time because of the noise. Potential for non-awakening sleep disturbance. Affects the acoustic character of the area such that there is a perceived change in the quality of life.	Between 45dB and 55dB L _{Aeq,1hr} (45 to 57dB for Air Traffic) > 70dB L _{Amax} (1)	Between 40dB and 45dB L _{Aeq,8hr} (40 to 48dB for Air Traffic) > 55dB L _{Amax} (1)
Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL)	Noticeable and disruptive: Noise causes a material change in behaviour and/or attitude, e.g. having to keep windows closed most of the time, avoiding certain activities during periods of intrusion. Potential for sleep disturbance resulting in difficulty in getting to sleep, premature awakening, and difficulty getting back to sleep. Quality of life diminished due to change in acoustic character of the area.	Between 55dB and 66dB L _{Aeq,1hr} (57dB to 66dB for Air Traffic) > 70dB L _{Amax} (1)	Between 45dB and 57dB L _{Aeq,8hr} (48 to 57dB for Air Traffic) 58dB to 82dB L _{Amax} (1)
Unacceptable Adverse Effect	Noticeable and very disruptive: Extensive and regular changes in behaviour and/or an inability to mitigate effect of noise leading to psychological stress or physiological effects, e.g. regular sleep deprivation/awakening, loss of appetite, significant medically definable harm.	greater than 66dB L _{Aeq,1hr}	greater than 57dB L _{Aeq,8hr} > 82dB L _{Amax} (1)



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Noise Annex Table

- *As our policy originated from our desire to control developments close to the airport it was very aviation noise focussed but we expanded it to include Road and Rail, as again NEC B set the boundary to that development.*
- *The L_{Amax} levels were problematic as PPG24 states that 82dB is the level which at night would move a location from NEC B to C. So we stuck with that but in hindsight I would look to reduce that level.*
- *The policy also requires appropriate mitigation, layout and design to reduce the impact of noise on future residents.*

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ProPG: Planning & Noise

- Subsequent to the adoption of our policy, ProPG arrived as a consultation document.
- It recommends an upper limit of 69dBA which is an improvement from PPG24.
- However unless this document is formally accepted by the Government (i.e. a new PPG) or is adopted and embedded into the LA's Local Plan it may not carry much weight.

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