



Local Strategic Statement



 MoleValley
District Council



- 1.6 The Statement is divided into four sections. The first provides a broad background to the Gatwick Diamond and identifies eight key themes around which the Statement is structured; the second sets out, for the shorter term, a strategic approach with respect to issues on which there is already a broad

- 2.3 The Gatwick Diamond is acknowledged for its strengths both as a place to live and as a place to work. Its location, with Gatwick Airport at its centre and with high quality road and rail connections to London, Brighton and the wider South East, has been recognised in successive studies as a key factor in its attraction for businesses and residents alike. Proximity to the Airport and connectivity have helped create the conditions which have enabled the Diamond to grow as a national and international business location, whilst the variety of towns and villages has resulted in living environments suitable for those who look to work locally as well as those who commute longer distances for their work.
- 2.4 At the strategic level, however, there are significant issues which will need to

20 years, the period over which local authorities are or will soon be planning. Moreover, whilst the economy remains a core element, the Statement has a much wider remit, bringing together, at a strategic level, the various aspects which contribute to the quality of life of the Gatwick Diamond,

- 3.3 This approach reflects the outputs from the Stakeholder Workshop in July 2010. Stakeholders continued to identify the economy as a driving force for the area but this was balanced by a recognition of the other issues which need to be addressed as part of any vision for the area - the way in which new housing is delivered so that the Diamond can continue to meet the needs of those who live here and those who work here; the way in which the countryside is managed to strengthen the urban/rural mix which is one of the Diamond's biggest attributes; the way in which transport, education and other elements of the social and physical infrastructure are provided; and the challenges of securing a living and working environment which is genuinely sustainable for the long term.
- 3.4 The Statement has therefore been structured around eight central themes which together provide a framework which informs the strategic planning and economic decisions to be taken by each local authority :

A flourishing and competitive knowledge based economy with high levels of entrepreneurship, providing sustainable employment and operating in an environment which enables the Diamond to be recognised, nationally and internationally, as one of the top locations for businesses

Strong, growing and aspirational communities with the skills to access the job opportunities available in the Diamond

Towns and villages which retain their individual character whilst responding to the demographic and economic needs for new housing and providing a sustainable environment for local communities to live and work in

Regeneration of areas which need change and improvement to meet modern expectations

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an environment which enables the Diamond to be recognised, nationally and internationally, as one of the top locations for businesses

Regeneration of areas which need change and improvement to meet modern expectations

- 4.1 The Gatwick Diamond is generally viewed as having a relatively strong economy, performing well against a number of key indicators when compared with the South East and Great Britain as a whole. Productivity (Gross Value Added (GVA) per worker) is high, economic activity rates are high, and the ratio of jobs to people is high.
- 4.2 However, whilst performance is reasonably strong, a number of indicators suggest that the Diamond may not be maintaining its relative position. Since 1999 growth in GVA has been below the South East average; a lower proportion of the workforce is engaged in knowledge based industries; growth in working age population has been and is projected to be comparatively slow; and one of the larger sectors of the economy, transport, is expected to decline in employment terms at least. The most recent assessment, in the North West Sussex Employment Land Review, whilst focussing on the southern part of the Diamond, suggests that demand from knowledge based industries is likely to be limited whereas demand for warehousing and related service industries is likely to be much stronger. The current economic climate means that decision making is more difficult as the need to deliver short term economic recovery, led by those forms of development in the highest demand, has to be balanced against long term objectives which could result in land remaining undeveloped.

A 'knowledge based' economy

- 4.3 The Gatwick Diamond vision involves a shift in the structure of the economy with an emphasis on businesses which require higher skill levels, on entrepreneurship and on enterprise. The most recent market analyses continue to suggest that the strongest demand for employment floorspace is likely to be from the warehousing and distribution sector. This alone, however, will not bring about the repositioning sought by the Gatwick Diamond Initiative. If a more knowledge based economy is to be delivered, interventions will need to be sustained over an extended period of time to address some of the perceived weaknesses of the Diamond economy – the local skills base, the availability of high quality sites and premises, opportunities for smaller businesses and 'start ups', the transport infrastructure. Such an approach is made harder at a time when any form of economic development, whether or not it accords with the wider vision, is of value in bringing new jobs and new opportunities.

The Scale of Economic Growth

- 4.4 Sustained growth of the economy over a long period is at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond Vision. Economic growth has the potential to deliver new and better employment opportunities, a more balanced 'knowledge based' economy and, more generally, higher levels of prosperity. However, a growing economy also brings with it an increased demand for labour and the potential for 'overheating' with businesses competing for scarce labour or deciding not to locate in the area because of labour shortages. Measures which encourage and enable people to live and work locally can help this.

However, it is recognised that economic growth at a level which significantly enhances the Diamond's role in line with its vision will need to be accompanied by some housing growth if there is not to be a significant increase in longer distance commuting.

Primary locations for economic growth

- 4.5 Given the strength of Crawley/Gatwick as a business location and the concentration of demand there, this area is expected to be the main focus for future economic development, at least in the short and medium term. Redhill/Reigate and, to the edge of the Diamond, Leatherhead, with their locations close to the M25, attract a slightly different business market and are also expected to continue to be important locations for business development. This does not mean that business development in other locations is precluded. In general, that development is likely to reflect the particular attributes of the smaller settlements and support local communities rather than providing strategic employment growth.

Business development opportunities

- 4.6 Opportunities for new business development exist from within the built-up areas across the Diamond and extensions to existing employment areas will also help to increase the range of opportunities. There is potential, as is being explored in Manor Royal at Crawley, in the corridor between Gatwick Airport and Redhill, and in town centres, to regenerate existing employment areas, creating business environments attractive to a range of knowledge based companies. This will, however, require a strong policy-led approach if, at least in the short term, a stronger demand comes from businesses based around warehousing or distribution

Local Strategic Direction for the Short to Medium Term

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will plan for economic growth with employment levels rising to reflect a strengthening and repositioning of the Diamond economy and the character and structure of individual local economies.***
- ❖ ***In the short and medium term the primary focus for new business development will be the areas around Crawley and Gatwick, reflecting their existing strength as a business location and the potential for attracting growth to this location.***
- ❖ ***Redhill will be the other main focus and will continue to grow.***
- ❖ ***Other development reflecting local needs and opportunities will be supported at towns across the area to maintain and strengthen the variety of opportunity which exists.***
- ❖ ***In established employment areas, coordinated local policies will seek to secure regeneration and improvement to provide an identity and environment in which a wider range of knowledge based industries can prosper.***

5. PEOPLE, PLACES AND COMMUNITIES

Towns and villages which retain their individual character whilst responding to the demographic and economic needs for new housing and providing a sustainable environment for local communities to live and work in

Regeneration of areas which need change and improvement to meet modern expectations

Strong, growing and aspirational communities with the skills to access the job opportunities available in the Diamond

- 5.1 The most recent estimates from the Office of National Statistics suggest that the Gatwick Diamond (as defined by the six districts and boroughs) had a

the quality of the environment or of access to services falls below that to

the work of the Inspire Group. The ambition is to secure a university centre to act as a catalyst for change, raise aspirations and enable more people to develop the skills needed in a changing economy. With the constraints on Government expenditure, whilst this may remain a long term aim, the strategic direction may need to focus on shorter term initiatives to strengthen the pathways into higher education and to secure a university presence through the collaboration of existing institutions rather than as a stand-alone campus.

Local Strategic Direction for the Short to Medium Term

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will promote the individual***

developing courses and other training opportunities at existing or expanded locations, geared in particular, to the needs of local businesses.

6. TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

A sustainable transport system which gives good access to Gatwick Airport, the main centres of employment and the larger town centres

Access to superfast broadband throughout the Diamond

- 6.1 Increasing congestion on the transport network is an acknowledged issue, and improvement of the transport infrastructure is vital to the success of the Gatwick Diamond. Progress has been made, for example, through the 'Fastway' bus system, and the Thameslin

business and tourist travel. There is potential for the airport to grow within its capacity as a single runway, two terminal airport, first to 40 million passengers per annum (mppa) and possibly 45 mppa over time.

- 6.6 Growth at Gatwick within its current configuration as a single runway, two terminal airport has been and will continue to be supported, subject to the ongoing implementation of measures to mitigate the impact of the airport. The Gatwick Diamond Initiative has a longer-term aspiration to improve the business passenger model at the Airport, both in terms of quality and convenience and, to the extent that this can be influenced, the destinations served, now and in the future. It will look to work with the Airport to secure this.
- 6.7 Alongside the growth of the airport, there will need to be measures to contain its environmental impacts and protect the wider living and working environment of the Gatwick Diamond. A legal agreement is already in place to secure a range of environmental and transport initiatives as the airport grows to 40 mppa and the Airport is committed to reviewing that agreement as that level of throughput is reached.

Local Strategic Direction for the Short to Medium Term

- ❖ ***At a strategic level, transport policies will be focused with the aim of securing***
 - ***investment in sustainable transport to, between and within the two regional hubs.***
 - ***enhanced rail connectivity and reliability to London***
 - ***public transport connectivity to Gatwick and the main urban areas***
 - ***enhancement to the operation of the road network providing strategic access to Gatwick***
 - ***no deterioration of congestion beyond current levels, both in terms of delay and journey time reliability.***
- ❖ ***Growth of Gatwick to its maximum capacity as a single runway, two terminal airport will be supported subject to ongoing agreements and commitments to manage the environmental impacts.***
- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities and their partners in the Gatwick Diamond Initiative will work together and with Gatwick Airport to secure a high quality environment for travellers at the airport and a range of routes which meet the needs of business users as well as those of the wider tourist market.***
- ❖ ***Partners in the Gatwick Diamond Initiative will continue to work with providers to extend and improve superfast broadband across the Diamond***

7. COUNTRYSIDE AND LANDSCAPE

An attractive rural environment which complements the towns and villages and which is readily accessible to those who live and work in the larger towns

- 7.1 Although most of the people living in the Diamond live in the larger towns, the countryside in which the towns and villages are set is an important component of the overall quality of life provided and is one of the area's economic strengths. Despite the urban pressures experienced by the area, the Diamond retains a range of attractive, and in some cases nationally or internationally important, countryside environments, ranging from the Surrey Hills AONB to the north, through the High Weald AONB to the new South Downs National Park. Large parts of the northern part of the Diamond are also protected by Green Belt policies.
- 7.2 The Diamond Authorities have already worked together to map green infrastructure across the area, and each of the individual local authorities is or will be working on Green Infrastructure plans which will help to provide a coherent framework for managing the countryside and respect this most important resource. These plans will need to recognise the varied role that the countryside plays, not just as a counterbalance to the urban areas which it surrounds, but as an economy in its own right.

Strategic Direction for the Short and Medium Term

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will look to safeguard and enhance the intrinsic character of the countryside, maintaining the opportunities it provides for employment, recreation and renewable energy.***
- ❖ ***Greenfield development and loss of countryside will be kept to a minimum.***

8. TOWARDS A LOW CARBON ECONOMY

An overarching determination that development is sustainable and that the carbon footprint of the Diamond is reduced

- 8.1 The challenges of global warming and the need to develop lifestyles and businesses which are sustainable in the long term represent a theme which should run through strategies and policies at all levels. By addressing climate change through the development of a low carbon economy, the Diamond can achieve significant natural, social and economic benefits. The aspiration of the Diamond to minimise its carbon footprint can be addressed through all of its strategic aims and should be a central theme to future growth and development.
- 8.2 At a national level, the Climate Change Act enshrines the Government's commitment to tackle climate change and this is reflected in work being done locally. Individual local authorities are developing initiatives designed to secure more efficient use of energy at home and at work, more sustainable forms of development and the production of less carbon intensive forms of fuel.
- 8.3 To meet the challenging targets set within the Climate Change Act, it will, amongst other things, be necessary for much wider involvement of the business community, for whom there are significant potential advantages in

long term resource efficiency and energy resilience. A low carbon community will only be achieved by moving all sizes of enterprise towards the goal of greater resource efficiency. SMEs across the Diamond are an attractive untapped market ripe for promoting novel resource and cost -saving technologies. A step-change in the engagement of this sector will bring mutual benefits to both suppliers and end-users.

- 8.4 The Local Authorities and the Gatwick Diamond Initiative are already engaging in a range of cross-boundary projects designed to help reduce carbon emissions, including the sustainable transport initiatives of 'Easit' and research into woodfuel energy supplies. This cross-boundary approach to initiatives which benefit from joint working will be sustained.

Strategic Direction for the Short and Medium Term

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will develop and maintain strategies for securing more sustainable forms of development and a more efficient low carbon economy.***
- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will work together and with partners in the Gatwick Diamond Initiative to develop and support innovative projects which help reduce the Diamond's carbon footprint.***

SECTION 3: PLANNING FOR THE LONGER TERM

9. JOINT WORKING ON STRATEGIC ISSUES

- 9.1 The eight themes identified in Section 1 provide a broad strategic context within which the local authorities and their partners can consider the development of planning and economic policies, not just over the next five or ten years but as far ahead as 2031, the time to which new local development frameworks are likely to run. However, there are areas, such as in the delivery of housing and the provision of new business development opportunities, where currently agreed policies and allocations will likeDbe

sustainable forms of power generation attuned to the particular potential of the Diamond and the possibility of a join

Towns and Villages

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will seek to maintain a coordinated approach to the review of Town Centres and their roles.***
- ❖ ***Across the Diamond area and to the extent that it is compatible with the character of and local aspirations for the individual towns and villages, the local authorities will seek to secure sufficient housing and necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of those who live or work in the area, including needs arising from a repositioned Gatwick Diamond economy.***
- ❖ ***To assist in developing local strategies for housing, the Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will work together to establish a common understanding of locally generated housing needs so as to provide a sound basis for strategic decisions.***
- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will work together to consider and agree how locally generated housing needs can best be met.***

Transport and Infrastructure

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities and their partners in the Gatwick Diamond Initiative will review and update transport investment priorities to take into account local needs and aspirations as they emerge, through work on new local development frameworks and transport plans.***
- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will share information and views on long term strategic issues relating to government air transport policy.***
- ❖ ***As directed by national policies, land for a possible second runway will continue to be safeguarded until a full analysis of the issues at both a national and local level has been completed and new government policies are in place.***
- ❖ ***Building on local and Diamond-wide priorities, the Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will draw on work already being undertaken in Surrey and West Sussex to produce a coordinated approach to strategic infrastructure planning.***

Countryside

- ❖ ***As part of joint working at a district level, the Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will develop work already done into a green infrastructure plan for the Gatwick Diamond.***

Low Carbon Economy

- ❖ ***The Gatwick Diamond Local Authorities will work together to establish a coordinated approach to the development of a lower carbon economy in***

Planning and Community Infrastructure Levy	Diamond Initiative to plan for and agree infrastructure delivery to meet planned growth. Develop, as appropriate, a consistent and complementary approach to CIL charging schedules.	
Gatwick	Share views on and assessments of emerging Government policy	Ongoing
<i>Countryside and Landscape</i>		
Green Infrastructure Plan	Establish Gatwick Diamond Green Infrastructure Plan	July 2013
<i>Low Carbon Economy</i>		
Strategic Initiatives	Establish and agree areas for joint working	December 2011
Projects	Set up and take forward projects	Ongoing