

# AIRPORT EXPANSION MUCH MORE THAN A RUNWAY



*Fly* BARTON  
WILLMORE

The Airport Commission has identified that without the provision of new infrastructure the London airport system is likely to be under very substantial pressure by 2030, and demand will significantly exceed total available capacity by 2050. Their recommendation for expansion at Heathrow is therefore centered on meeting that infrastructure need in advance of 2030.

Beyond that infrastructure requirement, what is the wider benefit or social and economic impact of the Airport Commission's recommendation and is the planning system able to capture the resultant local, regional and national benefits?

## How do we 'plan' for Airport Expansion?

The Airport Commission's (the Commission) consideration of 'planning' and 'planning process' has focused on the risks associated with ensuring the necessary runway and airport infrastructure is in place by 2030, with all impacts assessed and mitigated as far as possible.

In their submissions, all three options indicated a desire to go down a Development Consent Order (DCO) process. The Commission sets out existing procedural options to secure delivery (DCO/Hybrid Bill) but it did not believe it was necessary or helpful for it to provide a firm recommendation.

Either way, whichever route is chosen it will only address the consenting process for the delivery of the airport expansion itself. It will tackle the specific impacts of the scheme; road and highways access, air quality control for example; but not the wider strategic implications of expansion, such as housing need, job creation off-site and wider social infrastructure

Whilst it would be easier to simply group these matters as 'benefits' to be captured, many (such as the provision of housing for airport workers) are intrinsically linked to the achievement of airport capacity by the 2030 and 2050 deadlines.

The Commission has sought to assess and quantify the resultant housing need, impact on the wider economy and creation of direct, indirect and induced jobs but it does not provide any meaningful comment on how these can be secured. Their recommendation recognises the need for informed and integrated planning that cuts across political and institutional boundaries, but it does not envisage the need for a Regional Planning Authority.

In light of the Commission's recommendation we must therefore ask ourselves and the industry whether the planning system, with its neighbourhood focus, is ready, willing and equipped to deliver this?



## What are the benefits of airport expansion likely to be?

# BENEFITS

### **Economic:**

Local, regional and national benefits through increased employment and wellbeing.

### **Employment:**

Direct, indirect and induced job creation locally and regionally.

### **Catalytic:**

Effects that arise as a result of the wider benefits that improvements to travel can create.

### **Housing:**

As a result of job growth.

### **Social Infrastructure:**

Schools, hospitals and leisure facilities.

### **Transport:**

Road and rail to improve access to labour and services locally and regionally.

While the Commission's recommendation is for a third Runway at Heathrow the final decision rests with the Government. It is therefore worth keeping in mind how these benefits relate to all options of expansion. These show the scale of delivery that would be required regionally as well as the benefits that could be gained.



## The Commission's predicted impact of each option

	GATWICK	HEATHROW
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	Up to £127 billion	Up to £142-211 billion depending on runway option.
Jobs by 2030 *	Total of up to 23,700 jobs. Direct jobs: 17,100 Indirect jobs: 1,500 Induced jobs: 5,100	Up to 96,100 – 112,400 depending on runway option. Direct jobs: 35,400 – 41,400 Indirect Jobs: 21,900 – 25,600 Induced Jobs: 38,800 – 45,400
New Homes by 2030**	Up to 18,400	Up to 60,600 – 70,800 depending on runway option.

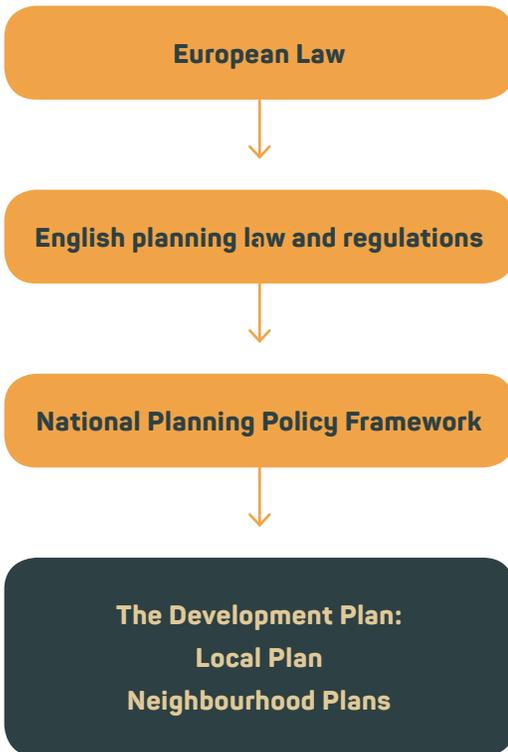
Statistics taken from:

- Gatwick Airport Second Runway: Business Case and Sustainability Assessment, November 2014
- Heathrow Airport Extended Northern Runway: Business Case and Sustainability Assessment, November 2014
- Heathrow Airport North West Runway: Business Case and Sustainability Assessment, November 2014

\* This is additional job creation compared to the 'do minimum' scenario.

\*\* Housing need has been calculated based on the higher job creation figures.

## How can the existing planning system respond?



The English planning system is 'plan led'. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) must be taken into account in the preparation of Local and Neighbourhood Plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must reflect and, where appropriate, promote relevant EU obligations and statutory requirements (NPPF Para 3).

In terms of statutory requirements, the Localism Act 2011 places a 'duty to cooperate' on Local Planning Authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis, to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross-boundary matters.

In the context of the above, the 'benefits' of airport expansion would need to be planned for through the preparation of Local Plans, with those policies then applied in the determination of the individual planning applications that may come forward by developers. The 'gap' between national guidance (set out in the NPPF) and the Local Plan is, following the abolition of regional planning, addressed by the 'duty to cooperate'. This is, however a duty to cooperate, not a duty to agree.

Based on the existing system, the following issues would therefore fall to being tested through the duty to cooperate:

## Geographical context

How would the sphere of influence be defined? For both options it would extend into and beyond London. How would the cross-boundary issues address London and the Mayor?

By way of example, we have shown the existing airport worker commuter locations (see figures 1 & 2). This demonstrates the geographic spread of not just direct job creation but the housing need associated with this.

## Job Creation

How will job creation (direct, indirect, induced and catalytic) be tested, apportioned and agreed? What is the likely type of jobs that will be created and the resultant requirement for new business space? What is the geographical need of that business space? How does that relate to land availability in proximity to the airport (notably this is an issue for Heathrow)? What is the level of unemployment / skill base of the population and level of out commuting? For example could new jobs be filled by existing residents who are out commuting or is there a mismatch with skills?

## Housing

How will the housing needs be tested, apportioned and agreed? Heathrow already operates within a constrained housing market, where demand generally exceeds supply and there is intense political pressure to curtail the extent of house building and development.

## Infrastructure

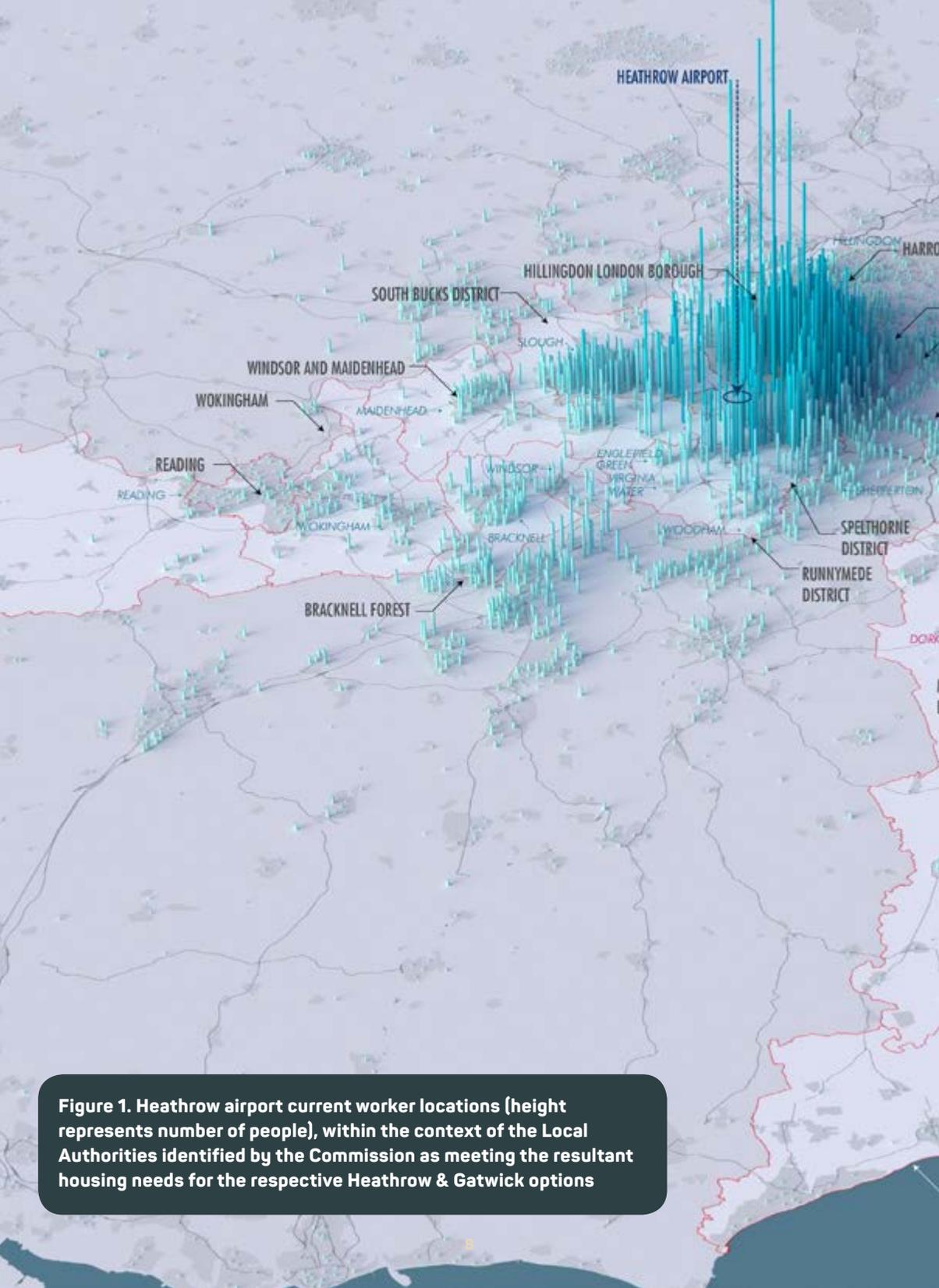
How will the wider infrastructure needs be planned for? This relates not just to the new housing but the social infrastructure required to support that new population? How does this relate to CIL? Could inconsistencies in approach to CIL at a local level impact on the location of development promoted by preferred by businesses?

## Practicalities

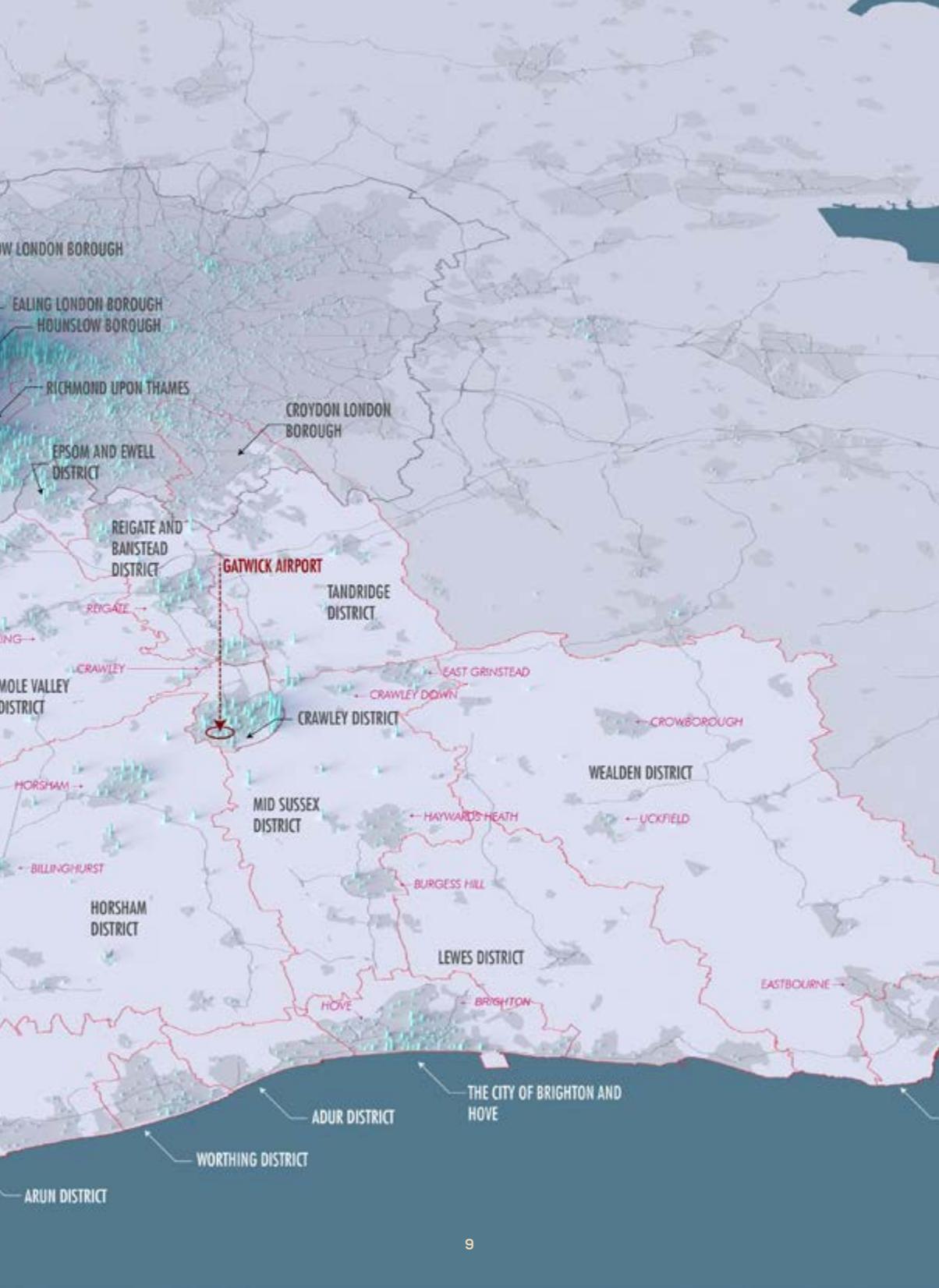
How would all parties be 'brought to the table' and how would the legislation be enforced? How will the wider impact and the catalytic impacts be apportioned? What is the mechanism for achieving a positive strategic response? Whilst a Government decision will likely trigger Local Plan reviews in certainly the nearest Councils, they will be prepared to different time frames.

The Industry's experience of the 'duty to cooperate' does not bode well for the success of the above. Notwithstanding this, is it simply too much to ask in the context of the current planning system with only London benefiting from a sub-regional plan.

There is ultimately a danger that the above housing, job and infrastructure creation would not be seen as a 'benefit', but something to be avoided or minimised in favour of maintaining the status quo – the vote winner.



**Figure 1. Heathrow airport current worker locations (height represents number of people), within the context of the Local Authorities identified by the Commission as meeting the resultant housing needs for the respective Heathrow & Gatwick options**



W LONDON BOROUGH

EALING LONDON BOROUGH  
HOUSLOW BOROUGH

RICHMOND UPON THAMES

EPSOM AND EWELL DISTRICT

CROYDON LONDON BOROUGH

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD DISTRICT

GATWICK AIRPORT

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT

ING

MOLE VALLEY DISTRICT

REIGATE

CRAWLEY

CRAWLEY DISTRICT

EAST GRINSTEAD

CRAWLEY DOWN

CROWBOROUGH

HORSHAM

WEALDEN DISTRICT

UCKFIELD

BILLINGHURST

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT

HAYWARD'S HEATH

HORSHAM DISTRICT

BURGESS HILL

LEWES DISTRICT

EASTBOURNE

HOVE

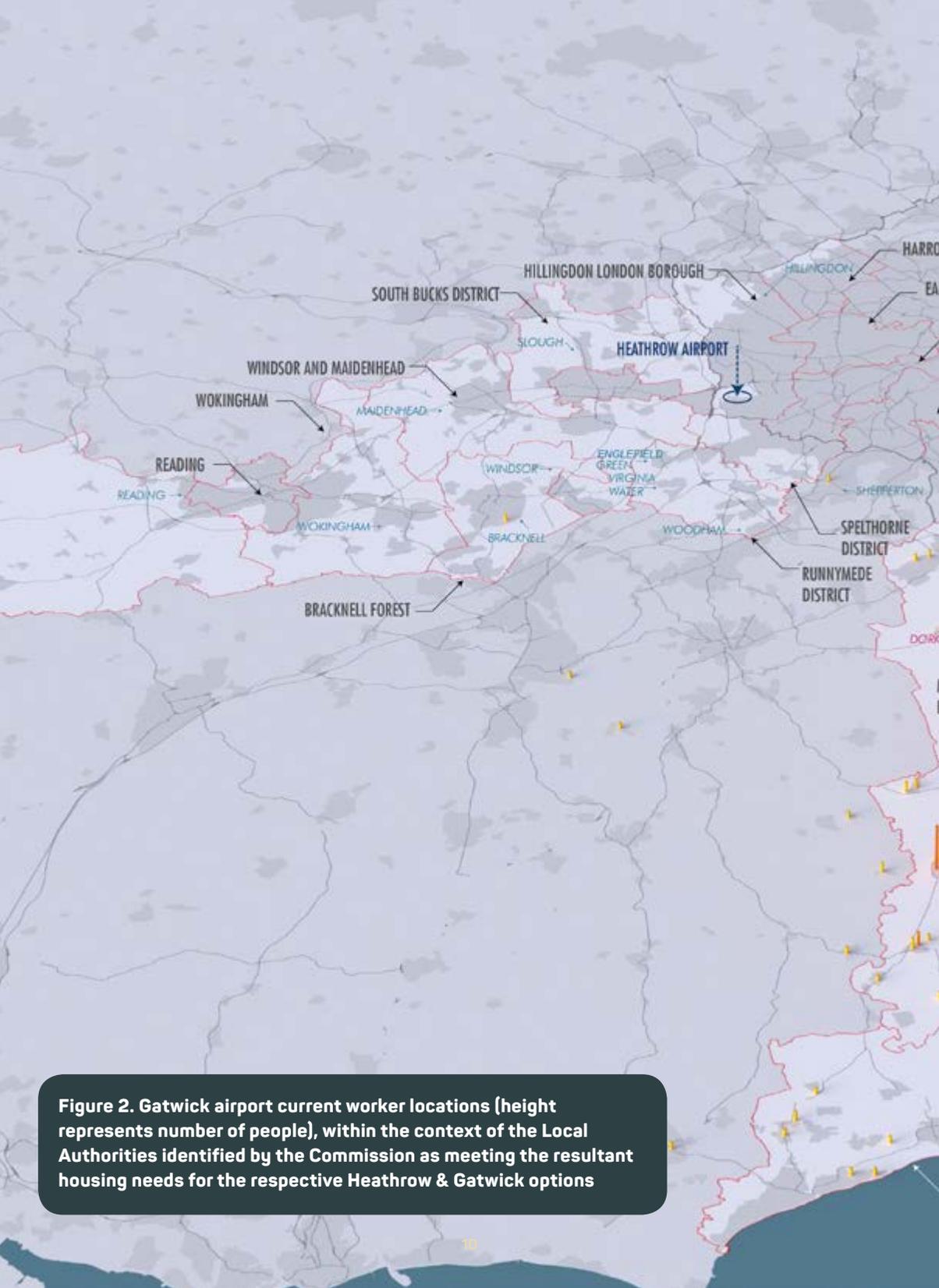
BRIGHTON

ADUR DISTRICT

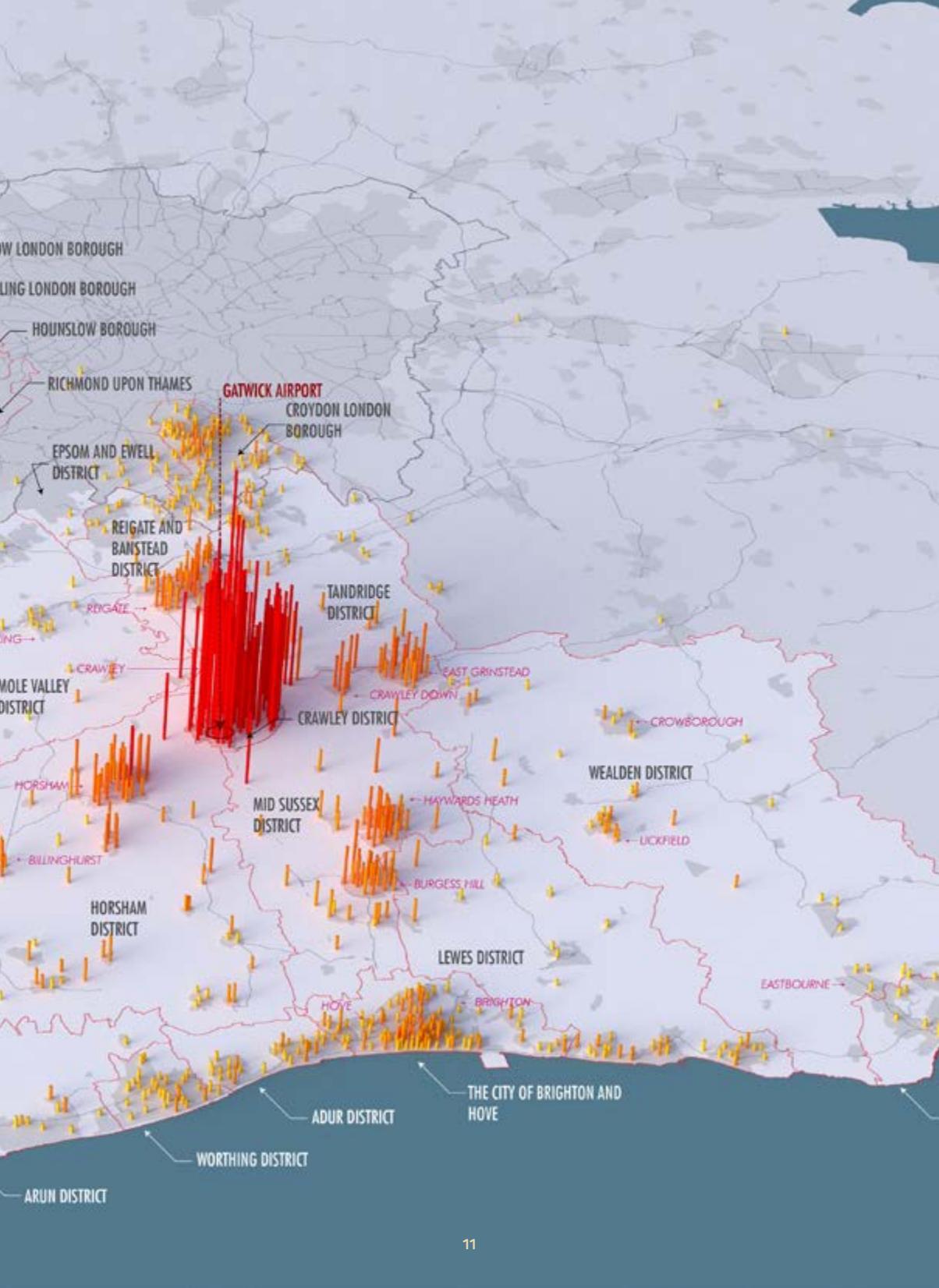
THE CITY OF BRIGHTON AND HOVE

WORTHING DISTRICT

ARUN DISTRICT



**Figure 2. Gatwick airport current worker locations (height represents number of people), within the context of the Local Authorities identified by the Commission as meeting the resultant housing needs for the respective Heathrow & Gatwick options**



NEW LONDON BOROUGH

WINDING LONDON BOROUGH

HOUNSLOW BOROUGH

RICHMOND UPON THAMES

GATWICK AIRPORT

CROYDON LONDON BOROUGH

EPSOM AND EWELL DISTRICT

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD DISTRICT

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT

MOLE VALLEY DISTRICT

CRAWLEY DISTRICT

WEALDEN DISTRICT

HORSHAM DISTRICT

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT

LEWES DISTRICT

ARUN DISTRICT

WORTHING DISTRICT

ADUR DISTRICT

THE CITY OF BRIGHTON AND HOVE

## What is needed?

The effective delivery of additional airport capacity will necessitate the need for a statement as to government policy. This, we believe, could be in the form of a National Policy Statement. However, whilst this could set out the principles of the development and the criteria or performance standards that the scheme should adhere to, it will not address the assessment and meeting of wider housing, employment and social and community needs. These will need to be identified and addressed through the plan making process.

At present, whilst Councils join together to commission assessments of housing needs (through the SHMA process), there is little joint working on the assessment of environmental capacity and apportionment of that need between Districts. The result will be an under supply in the delivery of new employment space and homes, as each Council will generally seek to restrain the extent of development.

We therefore believe this could result in a wasted opportunity and may well result in inefficient and a sub-optimal pattern of development. Instead, if the benefits of the airport decision are to be realised and the effects mitigated, we believe there is a need for a sub-regional planning response.



## How might a sub-regional planning response work?

At present, there is no statutory provision for the formulation and ultimate adoption of a sub-regional plan. There is nothing to stop the relevant Councils however, from bringing forward a joint local plan. This will need to be accompanied by strategic intervention from the government in terms of infrastructure delivery and the active participation of the relevant County Council. This would be a big political leap for the Council's involved.

The role of London is particularly interesting. London already benefits from a sub-regional plan and Heathrow will sit within the London Borough of Hillingdon. The Mayor can establish a sub-regional framework but his powers end at the borough boundary and the London Plan does not form part of the development plan in Surrey, Sussex or Berkshire.

The duty to co-operate does form a platform for cross boundary working but it lacks teeth.

This all points to the need for a positive decision on airport capacity, made in the national interest, to be accompanied by an equally positive approach to strategic planning.

This does not negate the role of neighbourhood planning but establishes the need for strategic leadership, if the wider effects are to be addressed and the potential benefits realised.

The National Policy Statement, which could be an annex to the NPPF could identify the areas affected and require the setting up of a joint sub-regional planning body to identify need and apportionment.

This should be accompanied by the necessary environmental assessments but also an infrastructure plan, where the communities affected can be assured that the infrastructure required to support the national interest will be delivered.



## So what next?!

As we get closer to the reality of UK airport expansion, in terms of both location and infrastructure, the need for regional cooperation at a plan making level will become increasingly apparent. Now is therefore the time to start making this clear to the government, so that the wider benefits can be gained without unnecessary delay.

We will therefore be working with our landowner, housebuilder and investor clients to actively lobby for the government to understand and act upon this need in tandem with an airport delivery plan.

Contact us to add your voice to the debate:

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