



CRISPIN BLUNT MP  
Member of Parliament for Reigate

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sir Jeremy Heywood KBC, CVO  
Secretary of the Cabinet & Head of the Civil Service  
Cabinet Office  
70 Whitehall  
London, SW1A 2AS

30<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Dear Sir Jeremy,

Thank you for your letter to me of 29<sup>th</sup> June replying to mine of 10<sup>th</sup> June.

I am afraid we, the members of the Gatwick Coordination Group, are profoundly unhappy with your equivocal and, frankly, evasive response.

The Government's consideration of the Airports Commission report will be a matter of great national importance. The existence of explicit and expressed constituency interests of senior members of the Government is a matter of record. So much so that part of the case being made by the promoters of development at Gatwick rather than Heathrow is the existence of these interests rather than the national interest.

It disgraces basic tenets of transparent and good governance that these suggestions can be made. They should be an affront to you as Cabinet Secretary. That you appear not to be in a position to address our concerns on this very high profile issue is a grave matter.

You say "these matters are considered on a case-by-case basis, reflecting specific Ministerial responsibilities and the nature of any constituency interest" as though this is yet to be undertaken. Yet this is an immediate, high profile and important issue that will presumably be decided by the whole Government, not just the Department of Transport.

The Code surely applies to ministers acting as members of the Cabinet and its Committees as well as within their departments. Your letter does its best to imply that the Code only applies within departments and would not engage matters of collective consideration. That would be a risible proposition, if it was not so serious as to significantly prejudice the national interest in this instance.



You will also not need reminding of paragraph 1.2.(h) of the general principles of the Code. Further, we recognise that it is not your role to enforce the Code, however, we do believe we are entitled to look to you to interpret it and allay obvious and published concerns, as in this case. If the Ministers listed in my letter of 10 June were involved in collective government or departmental consideration of the Airports Commission Final Report, we would regard that as a breach of the Code. You would then be consulted by the Prime Minister about our complaint. Since this is wholly foreseeable, this unfortunate chain of events can and should be averted.

Please will you reconsider your response now in light of the immediate publication of the Airports Commission Final Report.

*Yours sincerely  
Crispin Blunt*

Crispin Blunt

On behalf of the Gatwick Coordination Group of MPs

Crispin Blunt MP - Member of Parliament for Reigate (Chairman);  
Sir Paul Beresford MP - Member of Parliament for Mole Valley;  
Nusrat Ghani MP - Member of Parliament for Wealden;  
Rt Hon Nick Herbert MP - Member of Parliament for Arundel and South Downs;  
Jeremy Quin MP - Member of Parliament for Horsham;  
Tom Tugendhat MBE MP - Member of Parliament for Tonbridge and Malling;  
Henry Smith MP - Member of Parliament for Crawley;  
Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames MP - Member of Parliament for Mid Sussex