

Kevin Gleeson
The Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Planning
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BY ONLINE SUBMISSION

15 August 2024

Subject: Application by Gatwick Airport Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project – BusinessLDN’s Submission to Deadline 8

Dear Mr Gleeson,

I am writing on behalf of BusinessLDN regarding Gatwick Airport’s application to support dual runway operations through regular use of the existing Northern Runway to accommodate up to 74 million passengers per annum.

BusinessLDN is an organisation that speaks for over 170 leading businesses in London, spanning a wide range of economic sectors. We strive to make London the best city in the world in which to do business, working with and for the whole UK. BusinessLDN was set up in the 1990s to create solutions to London’s challenges and we have helped create some key changes over the years such as successfully campaigning for the creation of the office of the Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL), Crossrail (now Elizabeth Line), the Night Tube and more recently for funding for TfL.

London’s airports play a vital role in enhancing international connectivity. As such, investments from the private sector, such as Gatwick Airport bringing their existing second runway into routine use, should be seized with both hands. **We are supportive of the proposed Northern Runway Project plans.** These plans will create more jobs, generate new opportunities for businesses and people living in and around London Gatwick, and unlock wider economic growth and global connectivity for the capital.

As an island in a globalised economy, the UK requires a thriving aviation sector and sustainable aviation expansion in London and South East is beneficial for the UK as a whole. 60% of international tourists arrive in the UK via London and airports also play a major role in trade. Airports in the region account for approximately three quarters of UK’s total air cargo tonnage, a substantial proportion of the county’s trade activity.

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We are pleased that the majority of the construction for Northern Runway will be taking place within the current airport boundaries. It is very positive that the application has been shaped by a programme of detailed assessments, including community and stakeholder engagements, and public consultations (since 2021) to ensure disruption to local communities is minimised and appropriate measures to mitigate noise and environmental impacts are taken. The proposed plans will futureproof the airport for future demand and will mean improved facilities and passenger experience, attracting further jobs and business opportunities.

There is a huge economic potential for the Northern Runway Project, estimated at £21.6bn net present value according to analysis based on the National Economic Impact Assessment. It is vital for the UK's economy that London re-establishes its place as the leading European hub for international travel and that the city is on a clear path to being a global leader in sustainable international travel.

Enabling new private investment will help develop new surface access and onward connection options for visitors to UK airports, as well as continuing the programme to modernise the UK's airspace. Strengthened public transport links and road access enhancements will also help integrate London's airports into the wider public transport network, enabling passengers and staff to make better use of them and travel more sustainably.

In doing so, the new Government's support will be key for the aviation industry to enhance its efforts to decarbonise and address any environmental concerns about the impact of expansion. The global aviation industry has committed to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Recent announcement for a new bill to support the production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) via a revenue support mechanism is very welcome.

The aviation sector underpins the UK's position as an island trading nation: it enables businesses to access new markets and establish critical relationships with clients and suppliers. Helping the aviation sector grow sustainably is essential to help our nation's economy take off.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Polyvios Polyviou
Transport Programme Director, BusinessLDN