

55,000 businesses issue support for Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway plans

- 52 business groups across the UK have pledged support for Gatwick Airport's plans
- Business support for Gatwick's plans has increased since 2021 letter of support
- Letter to Transport Secretary says the pandemic demonstrated the benefits Gatwick generates cannot be taken for granted and urges supporters to make their voices heard

In a joint letter to the Secretary of State for Transport, representatives of more than 55,000 businesses across the UK, have come together to pledge their support for Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway Project.

This low-impact plan, designed to maximise the use of existing infrastructure, involves moving the centre line of Gatwick's current Northern Runway 12 metres - to enable it to be used for departing flights alongside the existing Main Runway.

Led by the Gatwick Diamond Initiative, 52 business groups across the UK – including the Institute of Directors Sussex, CBI London and the London Chamber of Commerce – have put their names to the letter of support. In 2021, 36 business groups, representing 20,000 members across the South East wrote to the Transport Secretary offering support for Gatwick's plans. This increase in support, both in numbers and geography, demonstrates the appetite from the UK business community to support Gatwick's future and to recognise the national importance of this application.

Many of the businesses represented in the letter have benefitted from Gatwick's supply chains, from the millions of tourists who fly into the airport each year and from the diverse economic clusters that have flourished in the Gatwick Diamond region due to the connectivity and opportunities offered by the airport.

In the letter, issued today, the signatories said they recognised the benefits Gatwick had generated for the region in previous years, but stated that the impact of the pandemic and ongoing economic challenges, means these benefits cannot be taken for granted. With the Northern Runway plans offering new global and regional connections, not to mention more than 10,000 jobs and a significant economic boost of over £1bn per year, the opportunity to support the nation's economy and increase our country's resilience is the business community is proud to support

Brett North, Chair, Gatwick Diamond Initiative said: "Gatwick Airport is the epicentre of the South East economy, and plays an important role in attracting and retaining businesses, strengthening the diversity of our economy. Gatwick's plans for the northern runway and its continuing commitment to invest in its infrastructure offers opportunities for employment, retaining a skilled workforce and the continued economic success of the region."

Michele Augousti, Chair, IoD Sussex said: "Gatwick Airport's use of an existing runway and its preference for sourcing local suppliers shows a commitment to the utilisation of existing facilities, as well as encouraging economic growth in the area thereby supporting the local business community; both initiatives are to be commended."

Anneka Hendrick, CBI Regional Director, London and South East said: "A thriving aviation industry is critical to supporting the ambition for delivering greater sustainable growth by ensuring that the UK remains an internationally competitive destination for investment. Airports also play a key role as

economic anchors in local communities by creating jobs, supporting supply chains and driving growth.

“With the transition to net zero a key challenge for the economy, Gatwick are absolutely right to focus on their sustainable aviation plan to help reduce noise levels and carbon emissions. As a predominately leisure-orientated airport, Gatwick’s plans for its Northern Runway can play a major part in the success and growth of the country’s tourism industry, whilst improving the airport’s reliance and resilience, help meet future passenger demand and provide greater international connectivity.”

The 52 groups now urge their members to register with the DCO to ensure the views of their members are represented in the government’s consultation process. Visit www.investgatwickdiamond.co.uk/gatwick-northern-runway to discover how.

ENDS

For further information please contact Helen Rix: helen.rix@gatwickdiamond.co.uk or 07984 428875

Notes to Editors

Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

14th September 2023

Dear Secretary of State

As one of the world’s busiest airports, Gatwick is a vital piece of national infrastructure that provides investment and commercial opportunities for our members and the organisations we represent.

In 2021 we wrote to your predecessor, Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, as a coalition of 36 business groups. Our letter represented 20,000 businesses from across the South East who benefit from the Gatwick supply chain, the millions of tourists who fly into the airport each year and the diverse economic clusters that have flourished.

We now write to you again to reiterate our support as Gatwick’s planning application, to bring its Northern Runway into routine use, makes its way through the Development Consent Order process.

Since 2021, the support from the business community has significantly increased, both in numbers and geography. Today, 52 business groups, representing over 55,000 businesses across this Region & the UK have pledged support for Gatwick’s Northern Runway Project.

This increase demonstrates the appetite from the UK business community to support Gatwick’s future and to recognise the national importance of this application.

The South East has worked hard to recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic and navigate the current economic challenges. With the Northern Runway plans delivering new global and regional connections, not to mention more than 14,000 jobs and a significant economic boost of over £1bn per year in the Region, the opportunity to support the nation’s economy and increase our resilience is one we are proud to support.

We welcome Gatwick's commitment to ensure local people are supported through new jobs, education and skills, as well as giving regional businesses opportunities for inclusion in the airport's supply chains. This will help increase local businesses' investment and create opportunities now for residents, and for future generations.

Finally, but no less important, we also welcome the airport's plans in relation to the impact on the environment and note the airport's commitment to a global low carbon future for aviation. This aligns with the wider UK aviation sector's ambitions to achieve net zero aircraft emissions and supports the Government's climate targets.

We urge you to support this planning application as it moves forward with its Northern Runway Project. Together, we can overcome the challenges we face, revitalise our region, and build a brighter future for all.

Yours sincerely

Brett North
Chairman

cc:

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Stewart Wingate, Chief Executive, Gatwick Airport Ltd



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Chairman
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Christina Ewbank
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