

Good afternoon, my name is Simon Matthews, I am the owner and director of Matthews Associates, a specialist consultancy based in Dorking, providing services mainly to the public sector since 2011.

The Gatwick Northern runway expansion is important to my business in three ways:

One as an SME business, the ability to travel easily and inexpensively to potential clients, both domestically and internationally is important to me, considerably widening my field of operation. This providing me with additional business opportunities within the UK but also potential to secure overseas clients.

Secondly, as an economic development consultancy, I 100% appreciate the positive economic benefits of having such an airport within the Southeast region, creating prosperity for businesses and individuals alike. The presence of Gatwick is of undeniable economic benefit to the region, an expanded more efficient airport can only further enhance these already proven positive economic factors. Recent Gatwick economic summits have been invaluable in underpinning the airport's pivotal role as an economic leader.

Thirdly, as a consultancy, often working in the visitor economy and tourism field, I absolutely can see the wider benefits of a potential increase in inbound tourism to the SE region. As Gatwick's destination map continues to grow, it brings additional inbound tourism potential with every new destination.

However the airport must continue to prioritise inbound as much as outbound use. Its support for the sub-regional visitor economy should be a permanent requirement post outcome of this application. With the Gateway Gatwick Group being the primary vehicle to deliver this much needed support.

Finally as a resident living just a few miles from the airport, personally, my family and I will benefit from the enhanced flight offer the runway expansion will bring, hopefully with more customer choice of destinations, enhanced frequency and a competitive environment offering real value for money to passengers.

I am also conscious that many of the negative environmental issues are being mitigated by quieter more efficient aircraft and the efficient management of the airspace. However from an access perspective I would ask that Gatwick consider using its influence and financial strength to improve the east-west rail access via the North Downs Line, which is at present infrequent, slow and unreliable. In line with the new Northern runway the North Down Line needs electrification and upgrading to be fit for purpose as a key access route to/from the airport.

In summary I wholeheartedly support the proposed Northern Runway expansion and hope that the planning process can be expedited quickly and efficiently.