

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Gatwick Airport](#)  
**Subject:** Gatwick Northern Runway Open Floor Hearing - ID 20046327  
**Date:** 07 March 2024 12:07:56

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Dear Sirs

Having been unable to attend the Open Floor Hearing in person on 28 February I am very grateful for the opportunity now to make this further written submission:

I have lived and worked in Surrey since 1955, in a career embracing the private, public and voluntary sectors, but largely focused on local economic development.

My previous comments to the Planning Inspectorate were made in both a personal capacity and as Chair of Trustees at Surrey Community Action.

In each of those submissions I wrote to support the business and local economic case for the Gatwick Northern Runway proposal. I referred to the importance of balancing the economic benefits with protections for the environment. I highlighted more efficient and sustainable aircraft using greener fuels and cleaner engine and airframe technologies as all being essential to Gatwick's long-term future.

Immediately north of Gatwick Airport is the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. That is an environmental National Landscape jewel to be protected - not least because Surrey's skies below 10,000 feet are already full of aircraft en route to or from Gatwick, Fair Oaks, Heathrow and Farnborough. At higher altitudes planes overfly Surrey to Luton and Stansted.

I believe the Northern Runway proposals to be sound and that they should be approved - provided that there is adequate local infrastructure in place to cope with future demand at Gatwick.

However, I think there is another emerging and compelling reason for approving the Northern Runway plan for Gatwick.

The post-war Surrey I grew up in felt peaceful but I remember seeing Civil Defence posters warning us to prepare for the mutually assured destruction that was at the heart of the Cold War.

At that time the UK retained sizeable military forces in the air, on land and at sea.

In the nearly 80 years since the end of WW2 successive Governments have overseen the deliberate reduction of our defence capability across the Army, Navy and RAF. Recent commentators have stated that we are now - or need to be - preparing for a major war in the next few years.

Those of us old enough to remember the Falklands War will recall that key civilian ships like the SS Canberra and Atlantic Conveyor were requisitioned for military use. With the current deteriorating global security situation it must be a real possibility that in a war situation Gatwick Airport will need to be available in the same way.

The wars in Ukraine, Israel/Gaza and more recently in and around the Red Sea has seen

the increased use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or drones. I believe that civilian drones are coming to Gatwick anyway and, while I hope that the doom-laden predictions that WW3 is imminent are wrong, the civilian uses of drone technology will need runway access.

As the UAV industry evolves and grows - especially given the CAA's local prominence - I think that is reason enough to approve the Northern Runway proposal.

Its capacity will be needed for manned and/or unmanned aircraft - whether we are fighting a war or keeping the peace.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully