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Sent: 14 May 2024 15:43
To: Gatwick Airport
Subject: Coast to Capital - written copy of statement

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Hello,

Below is a written copy of the statement I gave on behalf of Coast to Capital at the Open Floor Hearing on 2nd May:

Coast to Capital is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that promotes and supports a positive vision for economic growth across and beyond our region. Over the last ten years we have made a significant impact across East Surrey, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove through our work as a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). We are now preserving and building upon the achievements of our LEP work by continuing to deliver economic development services to public and private sector partners in and around the region, whilst monitoring our historic investments.

This context means our statement on the Northern Runway is focused on the economic, social and environmental opportunities the proposals could bring to the region.

From this perspective, we recognise and welcome the creation of an estimated 14,000 jobs and a billion pounds worth of added value to the region's economy each year that the project could provide. A large-scale, private-sector investment on the scale of this project is an enormous economic catalyst and a sign of confidence in the future prospects of this area. Whether defined as 'Levelling Up' or something else, it is clear a lot of major public infrastructure investment for the foreseeable future will be directed towards the Midlands and the North. Outside of London, our area of the South East generally lacks a pipeline of such projects, which are crucial to expanding the productive capacity of our economy. This privately financed plan is therefore hugely significant and represents the type of investment this region requires if it is to remain competitive.

Notwithstanding that, given the scale of the project, we would urge Gatwick Airport to ensure that at each stage it fully considers and mitigates against the negative externalities an increased operation would bring – including congestion of the transport network around the airport and the impact of the natural environment. Decarbonisation of our transport network is a shared ambition among regional partners. As part of the Northern Runway project we would therefore be pleased to see Gatwick introduce more collaborative approaches like it has in the past on the use of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

We recognise that Gatwick has produced various report on these matters and are committed to developing more as the project progresses. Therefore, if the Northern Runway proposals are successful, we would urge Gatwick to actively work with local stakeholders to produce deliverable plans that ensure benefits are maximised once the runway is operational. We would particularly advocate for robust plans that address the evidence that earnings and aspirations are lower in the communities in close proximity to the airport, compared to those of commuters in high-paid industries within the area.

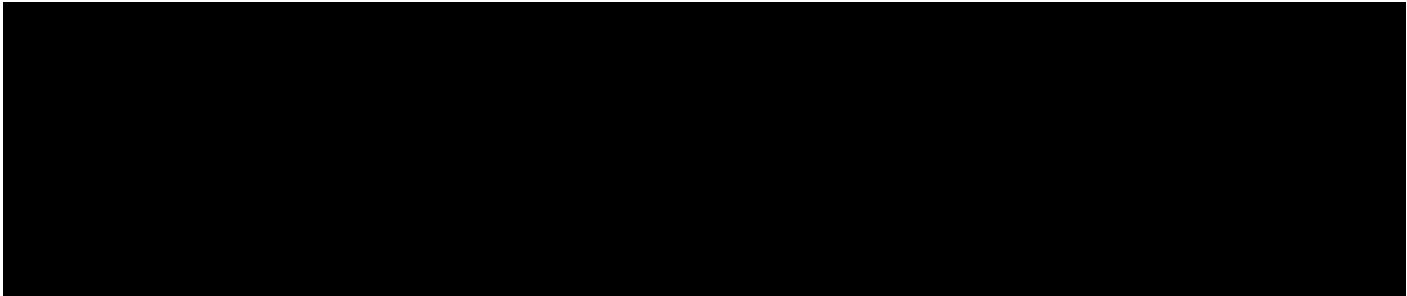
Economic success for this region depends on the sustainable and integrated development of Gatwick Airport. The reach and importance of the airport gives our area unique strengths and opportunities, and is essential for our competitiveness. It is nonetheless critical that the full range of views be considered in relation to the Northern Runway project, and for appropriate mitigations to be put in place which address these. Under these circumstances, Coast to Capital supports these proposals and looks forward to future developments.

(ENDS)

Best wishes,

Luke

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