

London uniting behind Gatwick as 11 councils urge Prime Minister to back expansion

A cross-party group of eleven London councils has urged the Prime Minister to support a new runway at Gatwick Airport and abandon proposals to expand Heathrow.

In a joint letter to Theresa May, the Leaders of Croydon, Hammersmith & Fulham, Hillingdon, Kensington & Chelsea, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Richmond, Southwark and Wandsworth councils highlight the “broad and growing consensus behind Gatwick expansion” and pledge to work with ministers to support this “bold and ambitious project.”

The authorities represent around 2.8million Londoners and include five Conservative and six Labour controlled boroughs. The full letter reads:

Dear Prime Minister,

As a cross-party group of London councils we are writing to highlight the broad and growing consensus behind Gatwick expansion across the capital and to urge your Government to support the construction of the airport’s second runway.

Pushing ahead with this deliverable and self financing project would be a major driver for the new housing, jobs and growth our country needs. Your Government’s backing would also send a powerful and timely message to investors around the world that London is an ambitious and growing city with real confidence in its future.

Over the last 20 years we have witnessed a succession of failed attempts to increase capacity at Heathrow. History has taught us that this airport’s location within a densely populated part of west London makes further expansion

impossible. The environmental impacts, legal barriers, taxpayer costs and political opposition are just too great to overcome.

We now know that Gatwick expansion offers a similar economic stimulus to Heathrow but with no cost to the public purse and a fraction of the environmental upheaval. It does not face the same legal obstacles and would create a more balanced, resilient and competitive airports network rather than putting all of our eggs in the Heathrow basket.

If your Government selects Gatwick as the location for a new runway you can be assured of immediate and constructive support from this cross-party group of councils. We will work in partnership with you, your ministers, Gatwick and the London Mayor to support the airport’s growth and to unlock the benefits it offers across the skills, employment, transport, regeneration, housing and inward investment agendas.

London is uniting behind Gatwick and we urge you to approve this bold and ambitious project.

Yours Sincerely

Croydon Council Leader Tony Newman

Hammersmith & Fulham Council Leader Stephen Cowan

Hillingdon Council Leader Ray Puddifoot

Kensington & Chelsea Council Leader Nicholas Paget-Brown

Kingston Council Leader Kevin Davis

Lambeth Council Leader Lib Peck

Lewisham Council Mayor Sir Steve Bullock

Merton Council Leader Stephen Alambritis

Richmond Council Leader Lord Nicholas True

Southwark Council Leader Peter John

Wandsworth Council Leader Ravi Govindia

