



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mike Martin MP
Member of Parliament for Tunbridge Wells

The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW10 4DR

06 June 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: Consultation Submission to the Applicant's Submission of Additional Information of 24 April 2025 for the proposed Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Project

I am writing to you to submit my response to the consultation, on behalf of residents in Tunbridge Wells, on the applicant's response to the Department for Transport's letter on the proposed Gatwick Airport Northern Runway Expansion, dated 27th February 2025.

Unfortunately, the applicant's response does not address the concerns that I laid out in a letter to the Secretary of State, dated 23rd January 2025, which was signed by the honourable members for Dorking and Horley, Mid Sussex, Tonbridge, Horsham, and Arundel and South Downs.

In the letter, we made it clear that the lack of independent noise monitoring in the villages and towns that surround Gatwick Airport makes it impossible for the Department to grant an informed decision on expansion. This because there is no reasonable evidence to support any assessment of the expansion's impact on noise pollution and the health of our communities. Both of those concerns have not been addressed in the applicant's response.

Furthermore, the applicant has failed to address the number of permitted aircraft movements at all times of the year, and specifically at nighttime, should the expansion go ahead. In our letter, we highlighted how our communities suffer from Gatwick's business model – "which places an emphasis on short-haul low-cost carriers that arrive late at night and depart early in the morning". Opening the Northern Runway will mean higher volumes of short-haul traffic but could also increase long-haul traffic using Gatwick's existing runway. Therefore, I would like to see a commitment from the applicant on rebalancing the time of movements so there is less need for aircraft to depart or arrive during nighttime, which is incredibly disruptive to the sleep and health of my constituents.



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Finally, I welcome the noise insulation proposal laid out in Requirement 18 by the Examination Authority (ExA). As stated in the letter, a noise monitor located over 17 miles from Gatwick's Southern Runway in Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, recorded aircraft noise in excess of 60dB over 1500 times during each of the summer months last year. Therefore, I ask that noise insulation schemes are considered for affected residents in Tunbridge Wells West.

I also welcome the applicant's commitment to more surface transport investment, in particular a proposed super bus route between Tunbridge Wells and Gatwick Airport. I ask that both the applicant and the ExA to consider implementing this in the short-term so my constituents can start benefiting from the economic 'output' that the airport already provides to connected towns and villages as quickly as possible. I also ask that the applicant considers adding a bus stop in Langton Green, so that this part of my constituency, which is the worst affected by noise pollution, sees a direct economic return from any expansion.

To conclude, I invite the Secretary of State to consider the letter, dated 23rd January 2025, as part of my response to the consultation. I have attached it to this correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Martin MP

Member of Parliament for Tunbridge Wells