

Airports Commission Consultation
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PO Box 1492
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GU22 2QR

09/12/2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

The South Wales Chamber of Commerce is a business representative organisation drawing members from a wide variety of businesses from across South and Mid Wales.

We agree with the principle behind the Airport Commission's setting-up; for the UK to compete on a global scale we need a hub airport that enables our businesses and people to connect to the rest of the world, and the rest of the world to be able to connect with us.

As a Chamber of Commerce we have been engaging with the debate around future airport provision and have held events for our members to learn more about the proposals from both Heathrow and Gatwick.

For businesses in Wales the important factor regarding the location of the UK's future hub airport is accessibility. Travelling by car from Cardiff to Heathrow takes around 2 hours and 15 minutes while traveling time to Gatwick is an additional 30 minutes. By train, travelling time from Cardiff to Heathrow is around 2 hours 50 minutes with travelling to Gatwick again taking an additional half an hour. If you factor in the electrification of the great western mainline, the western rail access to Heathrow and the improvements to the M4 around Newport the travelling time to Heathrow becomes even more attractive and brings South East Wales within the important 2 hour travelling time to Heathrow.

Another important factor for Welsh businesses are the routes available from the hub airport. The Heathrow expansion option will add 40 new long-haul routes giving Welsh business people greater options when traveling to growing markets and enabling more people to access the fantastic tourism offer we have in Wales.

The decision about airport expansion is about more than passengers. Heathrow is Britain's most important freight port. It carries a quarter of all UK exports – twice the amount of the UK's two largest shipping ports combined. Yet Heathrow's cargo capacity on routes to the Asia Pacific is already exhausted – running at 97% capacity. One of our main aims as a Chamber of Commerce is to see the amount of exports from Wales increase. For this to happen we need to expand Heathrow.

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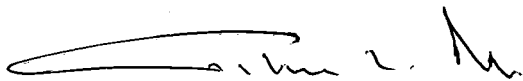
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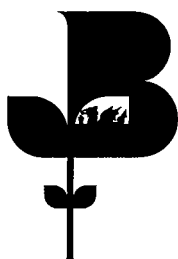
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After looking at all the options we firmly believe that the option of expanding Heathrow airport is the best option for Welsh businesses, particularly if it is in conjunction with transport infrastructure improvements to reduce the travelling time currently taken to get to the airport.

Yours sincerely,



Graham L Morgan DipFS FCIB
Director
South and Mid Wales Chamber of Commerce



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Chamber of
Commerce**
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