

Heathrow boss: 'Expansion can help British exporters'

Lucy Tobin

HEATHROW could double its cargo capacity with a third runway that would "help even more British exporters trade with all the growing markets of the world" in Brexit Britain, the airport's boss said today.

John Holland-Kaye, the chief executive of Heathrow who yearns for expansion, also pointed out that, amid major uncertainty about the UK's economy and job prospects in the aftermath of the EU referendum, "a £16 billion privately-funded infrastructure investment will create jobs and growth across the UK".

"Our next Prime Minister has a real opportunity to secure Britain's legacy as an outward-looking trading

nation," Holland-Kaye added. "A decision on Heathrow expansion must be at the top of her in-tray."

It is now more than a year since Sir Howard Davies recommended Heathrow over Gatwick for expansion.

The comments came as Heathrow posted a 2.1% rise in cargo volumes in June, with most of the freight linked to China, India and Turkey. Strikes and bad weather put fliers off, though: passenger numbers fell 1.1% at 6.6 million during the month.

Heathrow is stepping up its attacks on rival Gatwick's campaign to win backing for the new runway in the south-east. Sir Nigel Rudd, who stood down as chairman of Heathrow last month, has hit out at Gatwick's

owner Global Infrastructure Partners, claiming the private equity firm is a "property speculator".

He explained: "They are in this to sell Gatwick – preferably with Heathrow constrained – that's what motivates them, not a desire to secure the future of the British economy. Gatwick's owners just want to sell with planning permission."

In a column for Business Travel News, Sir Nigel added: "I am a regular traveller through Gatwick, and as a businessman I have seen the way their shareholders run their business. It is frankly inconceivable that Government could choose their plan."

@lucytobin