

Gatwick plans \$1.56bn transformation with retail a focus



London's Gatwick Airport (LGW) - the UK's second busiest gateway with 35.4m passengers in 2013 - has outlined a £1bn (\$1.56bn) investment plan to further transform it in the coming years, with retail an area of focus.

LGW, which this week celebrates its fifth birthday under the ownership of a consortium led by Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP), is set to completely transform its North Terminal to match the revamped South Terminal as it prepares for an expected near-41m passengers within the next three years.

The North Terminal will accommodate the majority of the traffic growth which LGW describes as "crucial as Gatwick grows towards full capacity".

BIGGER DEPARTURES & REVAMPED RETAIL

Some £21m will be spent on creating a new North Terminal departure lounge with 2,800sq m more space for retail and restaurant units, the equivalent of 10 tennis courts.

This includes a new World Duty Free duty free and travel retail store opening in 2017 to match the walk-through in the South Terminal [*which was the world's largest World Duty Free store when it opened in 2012*].

Another £36m will be ploughed into creating a brand-new North Terminal check-in area including the world's largest self-service bag-drop zone with up to 60 bag drop units "virtually eliminating queues" claims the airport. The area will open in two phases between late 2015 and early 2016.

About £30m will also go into creating a North Terminal security area [*opening in 2016*] where passenger transaction times will be halved giving Gatwick the ability to process 5,000 passengers per hour. The airport says that new features such as reconfigured lanes and floor way-finding were tested in trials that resulted in double the throughput of passengers and "best-ever" service scores

ARRIVALS OVERHAUL

Some £10m will also be invested to fully refurbish the North Terminal arrival area due to open in summer

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2015. The relocation of existing shops and facilities will create a more spacious concourse and offering passengers a better choice of retail.



Other improvements will include state-of-the-art e-gates; replacement of lifts,

escalators and technology infrastructure; the reconfiguration of the Pier 5 facility and the construction of a new Pier 1 offering new aircraft stands, gate rooms, new lounge facilities, and storage for 2,600 bags.

Stewart Wingate (*left*), London Gatwick CEO, says: "The fresh £1bn investment is a clear signal that we intend to become London's airport of choice. Gatwick's success shows what can be achieved when competition is allowed to thrive."

The comment comes ahead of next year's airport expansion decision, when the UK must choose how it will develop its air infrastructure.