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Great Minster House
33 Horse Ferry Road
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10th May 2019

Dear Stuart,

RE: HSPG outcome objectives for any Southern Rail Link to Heathrow scheme

Thank you for attending the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG) Officers' and Leaders' Board meeting on the 21st March, at which you very helpfully outlined the Department's strategy for taking forward the delivery of the Southern Rail Link to Heathrow (SRLtH) scheme.

It was very helpful to hear you explain to our members' Officers and Leaders that following the market review exercise the Department now intends to take the lead in defining the minimum requirements and objectives of SRLtH, such that a preferred scheme can be identified and developed as quickly as possible.

To support this process, you asked if HSPG could set out our priority objectives for the scheme. This letter summarises some of the high level requirements for SRLtH we have previously provided, and expands this further to provide some additional criteria against which any candidate scheme can be assessed.¹

HSPG 2018 High Level Outcomes Statement

HSPG have engaged with Heathrow Airport Limit (HAL) to develop a sustainable surface access strategy and transport assessment for the airport's expansion that can best meet the region's requirements. This generated HSPG's published 2018 Outcome Statements describing HSPG's high level priorities in terms of how an expanded airport should be delivered. The following elements of these Outcome Statements are pertinent to SRLtH:

- 4.1 *No increase in airport related road traffic to / from the airport campus (as promised by HAL & DfT) above the 2013 baseline and clear action if monitoring shows this is not being achieved. This should relate to the wider local and strategic road network and cover traffic generated by passengers, airport employees and those employed in associated services and supporting businesses, freight and deliveries.*
- 4.2 *Binding mode share requirements (applying to the area defined above) for passengers and staff based on the targets set out in the draft Airports National Policy Statement (public*

¹ Note though that the Colne Valley Park CIC are opposed to some options for the Southern Rail Link to Heathrow that impact on the regional park and has prepared a position statement to clarify its stance. This can be found at: <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/whats-special/countryside/>

transport mode share of at least 50% by 2030 and 55% by 2040 for passengers and a 25% reduction in all staff trips by 2030 and 50% by 2040 from 2013 levels) applying to the airport campus area.

- 4.3 *Western Rail Link to Heathrow and Southern Rail Access and associated service pattern and station strategy. These rail schemes would fill recognised gaps in the rail network serving a two runway Heathrow and they should be an ‘essential requirement’ to be in place at the outset of the operational phase of the expanded airport and at full service operating capacity as a condition for the airport being able to operate at full capacity or by 2040 whichever the sooner. These two together with a) new bold strategy for the local bus network to serve the area (including ‘green buses’, incentives and ticketing arrangements), and b) pedestrian / cycle transport connections to be included as essential components of the Surface Access Strategy that supports the DCO. Such requirements and obligations to also be part of HAL’s Operators Licence granted by the CAA or successor body.*
- 4.4 *Development and implementation of a sustainable freight strategy as part of the no net increase requirements and obligations.*

HSPG 2018 SRLtH principles

Building on the 2018 Outcome Statements, HSPG submitted as evidence to the 2018 Market Review² a more bespoke set of high level HSPG principles for the SRLtH scheme to deliver. There were as follows:

1. *Any market led proposals should serve to improve public transport options across the sub-region as well as specifically to and from the airport. Moreover, the proposals should provide a comprehensive solution for improving access to and from the airport for passengers and airport colleagues from both the London and wider south of England market.*
2. *The proposals should improve connectivity to existing and potential economic hubs.*
3. *The proposals should specifically embrace the findings of the M25 South West Quadrant study.*
4. *The proposals should acknowledge national schemes for pricing of journeys and not seek to charge premium fares for airport access.*
5. *The proposals should respect national and regional ticketing arrangements.*
6. *The proposals should be coordinated with off-airport development sites for housing and / or employment.*
7. *That proposals encourage modal shift and reduce congestion and that reduce environmental impacts not be at the expense of other (non-airport) passengers.*
8. *That key stakeholder groups form part of the assessment process for evaluating the market led proposal. HSPG request to be part of this process.*
9. *Government explain in detail how the risks that these objectives are not assessed consistently for all proposals be managed.*
10. *Enhanced rail connectivity must be in place prior to the utilisation of a third runway at Heathrow Airport for any additional Air Traffic Movements.*

Joint Evidence Base and Infrastructure and Joint Spatial Planning Framework Studies

In 2018 HSPG and HAL jointly commissioned a Joint Evidence Base and Infrastructure study (JEBIS) to understand the scale and phasing of all infrastructure requirements within the sub-region, accounting for growth related to both the airport and other “background” sub regional

² Letter from HSPG (Brandon Walsh) to Chris Grayling dated 20th June 2018

development. The study includes the immediate infrastructure requirements needed to support an expanded airport that might be included in a DCO, necessary airport related development beyond the boundary, and the phasing of any core third runway DCO submission scheme.

Building on the outputs of the JEBIS work, HSPG are preparing a Joint Spatial Planning Framework (JSPF) to strategically plan for the implications of airport expansion and help align Local Plans and infrastructure investment to sustainably manage the airport and ‘background’ growth together. By providing the long term growth and spatial planning context, both of these studies are highly pertinent to the requirements of SRLtH.

HSPG Outcome Objectives for SRLtH

Building on the emerging JEBIS and JSPF work and the previous HSPG outcome statement and principles, we have further identified the following criteria which any candidate SRLtH scheme should be assessed against.

As well as these HSPG objectives, we recognise that any scheme must demonstrate a strong business case that delivers value for money. As well as maximising benefits against costs it will also require strong commercial, financial and management cases. HSPG are agnostic about the funding source as long as the choice of funding source has no impact on fares.

<i>Assessment Criteria</i>	<i>Candidate SRLtH scheme to be marked strongly where:</i>
1. Improving public transport connectivity across the sub region	<p>The scheme is focussed on providing significantly improved connectivity, and hence benefits, to the regional economic hubs. The economic hubs can be existing or new, consistent with Local Plan strategies.</p> <p>The scheme provides connectivity and integration with other sustainable travel networks. It helps serve areas which are currently poorly connected and thus enables new patterns of movements.</p> <p>Specifically, the scheme should provide improved connectivity from the sub region to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all airport terminals of the airport for air passengers; • all major employment centres across the airport campus for airport workers; • other economic hubs within the sub region – i.e. improved connectivity within and across the sub region, not just connectivity with the airport; • areas in the sub region, particularly those closer to the airport, which are poorly served by existing transport links, but which have high levels of latent demand; and, • other economic hubs outside the sub region across the UK, particularly to South West London and the South and West of England.
2. Supporting employment and productivity growth	<p>The scheme supports and develops economic hubs in the sub region to provide employment and productivity growth, which with network and agglomeration effects create a transformative impact on the region’s economic growth.</p>

Assessment Criteria	Candidate SRLtH scheme to be marked strongly where:
	<p>The scheme drives high value-added employment growth within the sub-region by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significantly increasing the airport’s potential labour market by improving access to the airport from areas of the sub region which currently have poor connectivity with the airport; • support regional employment growth by improving the connectivity and labour markets of regional hubs; and • unlocking specific development sites that provide additional employment and catalytic development opportunities (consistent with existing and emerging Local Plan strategies)³.
<p>3. Supporting housing growth and reducing deprivation</p>	<p>The scheme connects areas which local authorities have designated for housing to meet both background and airport related housing demand. To enable this the scheme should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unlock capacity in specific housing sites that would otherwise be unattractive for development; • support the Government’s approach for general housing growth across the area through changing mode shares and travel options; • maximise the densification of the most sustainable connected locations; and, • reduce deprivation as measured by DCLG’s indices of multiple deprivation. <p>These benefits are likely to likely to be enhanced if the scheme includes new stations in areas currently poorly served by rail.</p>
<p>4. Encouraging modal shift</p>	<p>The scheme encourages significant modal shift from private to public transport, providing material improvements in highway congestion and air quality over a wide area of the sub region. As such the scheme has a demonstratable impact on helping to meet and even exceed the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) targets for an expanded airport, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a public transport mode share of at least 50% by 2030, and at least 55% by 2040 for passengers; • a 25% reduction of all staff car trips by 2030, and a reduction of 50% by 2040; and, • landside airport-related traffic no greater than today. <p>In addition to reducing car trips to the airport, the scheme also contributes to encouraging modal shift for non-airport journeys in the region,</p>

³ WebTAG unit 2.3 provides guidance on assessing employment effects, noting that the case for Crossrail, Crossrail 2 and East West Rail is to a large extent being made on the basis of such impacts.

<i>Assessment Criteria</i>	<i>Candidate SRLtH scheme to be marked strongly where:</i>
	<p>providing a measurable reduction in highway congestion along key corridors, particularly those which suffer from current high congestion and/or poor air quality.</p>
<p>5 Providing an attractive service proposition</p>	<p>The scheme provides a train service that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides fast journey times that are competitive with road from a wide range of destinations; • can comfortably accommodate peak volumes of rail passengers; • operates to a high frequency such that passengers potential wait time is minimised; • is resilient to delays and operates with high levels of reliability; • operates across the night, and at weekends and bank holidays with appropriate levels of service; • provides access to direct trains to as wide a range of destinations as possible; and, • makes interchanging between other transport modes or services as quick and easy as possible. Station facilities should offer strong connectivity to sustainable and rapid transport modes around the airport campus to serve the ‘last mile’ and drive modal shift.
<p>6. Operating with affordable fares</p>	<p>The fare structure is fully integrated with national rail fares, without additional premium for accessing the airport, as is currently levied on both the TfL Rail/Crossrail and Heathrow Express services. This means fares levels are equivalent to journeys of similar length, and that the fares to Heathrow are treated in the same way as to any other equivalent zone 6 station in the region.</p> <p>Fares should be integrated with smart ticketing, accept railcard discounts and provide for season tickets.</p> <p>The fare structure is independent to the financing of the scheme.</p>
<p>7. Minimising the environmental impact</p>	<p>The scheme minimises its impact on designated Green Belt and Colne Valley Regional Park, complies with local and regional planning policy, and be supported by host authorities. This is undertaken by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimising the operational environmental impact, of both the railway and any associated depot, in terms of noise, light, air quality and flood risk; • facilitating mode shift to provide air quality improvements in areas where currently concentrations of NOx and other pollutants exceed legal limits; • providing comprehensive mitigation, including in relation to any loss of green space, public rights of way, ecology, flooding and cumulative impact; and, • ensuring the design and appearance of any visible features and landscaping is of the highest quality to enhance the locality.

<i>Assessment Criteria</i>	<i>Candidate SRLtH scheme to be marked strongly where:</i>
8. Minimising the impact on highway users	<p>The scheme mitigates any potential adverse impacts on roads or highways users. In particular;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is no increase in level crossing downtimes, instead these are ideally reduced; and, • construction impacts on road users are minimised; and, • surface connectivity for leisure trips and access to the Colne Valley Regional Park is maintained or improved.
9. Minimising the impact on other rail users	<p>The scheme does not adversely impact existing rail users (both passenger and freight), but rather compliments these services across the region. Existing rail users experience no detrimental change in;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crowding level; • frequency; and, • journey time.
10. Allowing future enhancements	<p>The design and integration of the scheme with the existing rail network provides future flexibility and future proofing for further enhancements. In particular;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incremental extensions or enhancements to scheme could be deliverable at a future date that allows additional destinations to be served; and, • the scheme integrates with other rail and transport infrastructure enhancements that might take place across the region in the future, including: Western Rail Link to Heathrow, Crossrail 2, Waterloo and Clapham Junction re-modelling etc.
11. Providing early benefits	<p>The scheme is operational at the earliest possible date, ideally before the new North West runway opens and certainly prior to the opening of additional terminal capacity.</p> <p>The scheme provides all of the benefits described above under both a two and three runway scenario, and as such there is a strong business case for the scheme whether the airport is expanded or not.</p>

The collective view of HSPG and its members is that the SRLtH is an essential component for successfully delivering the surface access strategy of an expanded airport. Even without expansion we consider SRLtH as a necessary component to support the sustainable operation of a two-runway airport.

Given the importance of SRLtH to the region, HSPG look forward to working with you further in helping develop and promote this vital scheme.

Yours sincerely,



Lucy Owen

Executive Director, Heathrow Strategic Planning Group

On behalf of the following HSPG member organisations⁴:

- London Borough of Hounslow
- Slough Borough Council
- South Bucks District Council
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- London Borough of Ealing
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Runnymede Borough Council
- Surrey County Council
- Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
- Bucks and Thames Valley LEP
- Enterprise M3 LEP
- Colne Valley Park CIC
- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

⁴ Those authorities within HSPG not directly impacted by the scheme, while supportive in principle have not commented on this letter in detail.