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Your contact: Brendon Walsh

Date: 20th June 2018

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DR

Dear Chris,

A CALL FOR IDEAS FOR MARKET LED PROPOSALS FOR RAIL ENHANCEMENTS: SOUTHERN RAIL ACCESS TO HEATHROW AIRPORT

I am writing to you in my role as Chairman of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG)¹. HSPG was established in 2015 to enable the local planning authorities and other responsible organisations in the area surrounding Heathrow, to coordinate and where appropriate to align Local Plans and strategic or 'sub regional' development and infrastructure planning and governance. Your recent call for market-led proposal for rail enhancements is therefore of great interest to HSPG in regard to a potential southern rail access to Heathrow Airport.

HSPG welcome the commitment and recognition of the essential need for Southern Rail Access introduced into the latest draft ANPS, and is broadly supportive of the principle of assessing and stimulating interest from the commercial market to bring forward new rail proposals². Heathrow Airport is fundamentally important to the economy of the so-called "Western Wedge" spreading from West London along the M40, M4, M3 and A3 corridors out of London. Many observers, including the Airports Commission, have concluded that improved rail connections to the airport, including western and southern rail access, are justified on the basis of the future success of a 2-runway airport.

Organisations such as Thames Valley Berkshire and the Enterprise EM3 Local Economic Partnerships have taken the position that new rail connections should not be seen as mitigation for airport expansion. Indeed, government has explicitly stated at recent events that neither southern nor western access were dependent on another runway.

Therefore, in considering a response to your call for ideas for a southern rail access to Heathrow, HSPG's focus is on encouraging government to favour proposals which meet the needs of the

¹ HSPG members include: 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, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Colne Valley Park CIC.

² The Colne Valley Park CIC are opposed to some options for Southern Rail Access that impact on the regional park.

wider sub-regional economy, not only the far narrower needs of access to Heathrow Airport but also the wider need for orbital movement and improved connectivity and accessibility to opportunity locations for growth and intensification. Moreover, the airport acts one of the major public transport interchange serving the area to the west of London. The HSPG as a group does not favour any particular one of the several alternative schemes for southern access whilst individual members may support certain schemes.

I would also like to reference your department's sponsoring, via Highways England, of the M25 South West Quadrant Study. Within this study one of the options for accommodating demands for travel is to promote Heathrow Airport as a hub for public transport travel throughout the sub-region. Therefore, HSPG encourages government to favour proposals that properly take account of the findings of this important study.

To help you and your department in its deliberations on this important matter, HSPG has drafted the following principles that we ask to be applied when sifting responses to the call for southern rail access to Heathrow market led proposals. The HSPG principles are:

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.

A potential southern rail access to Heathrow is a very significant project for the economy and transport infrastructure of the HSPG area. It is important that any investment supports and enhances the HSPG area's strategic transport objectives. In essence we wish to deliver a high quality, sustainable and integrated transport system that improves productivity to grow our economy and compete in the global marketplace.

HSPG remains ready and willing to work with you and your department on the future assessment and development of a southern rail access to Heathrow airport.

Yours sincerely,



Brendon Walsh
Chair of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group

On behalf of the following HSPG member organisations:

- 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; and
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead,