

BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB)

REPORT TO: BLTB

DATE: 18 July 2019

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PART I

Item 12: Heathrow Airport Expansion - proposed consultation 2 response

Purpose of Report

1. To report on [Heathrow's expansion public consultation](#)¹ and to recommend a response. The consultation started on 18 June and runs until 13 September 2019.

Recommendation

2. You are asked to endorse the response set out in the appendix to this report.

Other Implications

Financial

3. There are no direct financial implications of this report for the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB).
4. Through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG), of which TVB LEP is a member, and Slough BC is the lead authority, some of the costs associated with responding to the expansion proposals incurred by LEPs and local planning authorities are being met by contributions from Heathrow Airport Limited. Government financial support for HSPG has also been secured.

Risk Management

5. There are limited risks for BLTB associated with Heathrow's consultation process. It is a public process, and it is open to anyone and everyone to respond.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

6. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB, should any questions arise.

Supporting Information

¹https://aec.heathrowconsultation.com/?gclid=EAlaIqObChMImMnupuud4wIVBbftCh3P6AIFEAAYASAAEgIN-vD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds

7. On 18 June 2019, Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) launched [“Consultation 2”](#), on their preferred proposals for developing and operating an expanded Heathrow, including the effects of expansion and how they intend to manage them. This consultation is a statutory process being carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and associated legislation and guidance.
8. In this consultation Heathrow are seeking feedback on:
 - their Preferred Masterplan for expansion;
 - their plans to operate the future airport;
 - their preliminary assessment of the effects of the airport’s growth;
 - their plans to manage the effects of expansion.

This consultation will refine Heathrow’s proposals before submission of their Development Consent Order (DCO) in 2020.

9. The proposals are extensive and cover a very wide range of policies and proposals, many of which are beyond the scope of this body’s competence.
10. In addition to responding to the proposals in this consultation exercise, TVB LEP has joined the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG) along with other LEPs and Local Planning Authorities, as a response to “duty to cooperate” obligations. HSPG is providing a full and detailed response to the airport’s proposals.
11. This consultation exercise is one of a series seeking our views about aspects of strategic economic planning. To avoid unintended inconsistencies between our responses, we have prepared a “Position Statement” on Heathrow expansion setting out our general position; detailed comments on the expansion plans will be fed in through the HSPG process.
12. TVB LEP has been a supporter of airport expansion in the south east and has expressed a preference for expansion at Heathrow over Gatwick. Our support for Heathrow expansion is conditional on there being a full range of mitigation measures addressing noise, pollution, congestion and other adverse impacts.
13. Whilst the LEP has made public its support for the expansion of Heathrow Airport since 2012, our support is not unconditional and we remain frustrated that Heathrow’s preferred masterplan indicates support for western and southern rail links to Heathrow but nevertheless favours a surface access strategy based on bus, coach and congestion levies.
14. TVB LEP acknowledges that not all local authorities share its support for expansion at Heathrow and it has published its support on the basis of it being a majority, not a unanimous, position.

Conclusion

15. Support for airport expansion is conditional on appropriate mitigation measures being in place, whether they relate to noise, air quality, congestion,

environmental impact or any other matter as well as Heathrow (absolute) commitment to rail surface access.

Background Papers

16. TVB LEP has a collection of reports and responses to previous consultations concerning Heathrow, Surface Access and related matters

<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/getfile/Public%20Documents/Strategic%20Economic%20Plan/TVB%20SEP%20-%20Strategy.pdf?inline-view=true>

Heathrow – Summary of TVB LEP and BLTB’s Position

1. The TVB Strategic Economic Planⁱ (2014) identifies proximity to Heathrow Airport as a major economic advantage because it:
 - is a source of employment;
 - supports inward investment; and
 - helps attract foreign owned companies (see page 13).
2. The London Heathrow Economic Impact Studyⁱⁱ (2013) concluded
 - The “western wedge” area around Heathrow Airport has a strong, dynamic economy. It generates £1 in every £10 of UK economic output and is home to over 2.4 million jobs. It is an economic powerhouse for the UK.
 - Within the western wedge area, the aviation and related activity at Heathrow Airport currently supports around 120,000 jobs and contributes £6.2 billion to the economy.
3. In March 2014, TVB LEP Forum resolved to accept the importance of retaining the world’s busiest hub airport at Heathrow and
 - a. To endorse the Airports Commission’s conclusion, at paragraph 33, page 13, that, “there is a clear case for at least one net additional runway in London and the South East, to come into operation by 2030.”
 - b. To reiterate the findings of the London Heathrow Economic Impact Study which identified that the “do-nothing” option of maintaining Heathrow’s two runways would result in a steady decline in local employment and prosperity.
 - c. To recognise the significant economic and employment benefits to the Thames Valley economy, and beyond of, Heathrow and Gatwick airports, and to put our support behind the option of an expanded Heathrow.
 - d. To support the call by the Airports Commission to implement immediate measures to improve the public transport surface access arrangements.
4. The LEP is co-designing (with government) a Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS), which makes numerous and strong references to the economic benefits (and some of the costs) linked to Heathrow Airport – the second busiest airport in the world by international passenger traffic and a major national focus for recent, ongoing and planned investment. The BLIS states that the expansion of LHR will be a major project in its own right but once completed, will reinforce further the economic significance of international connectivity through Heathrow Airport. The BLIS aims to exploit fully the benefits of Heathrow proximity including, most immediately, through the work of the HSPG and the priorities identified in the Heathrow-focused Science and Innovation Audit.
5. For these reasons, TVB LEP continues to support the need for expansion of the airport, subject to an appropriate package of mitigating measures addressing rail surface access, air quality and noise impacts on the airport’s neighbours.

6. The LEP support for expansion is a majority position; it recognises that within our partnership there are opponents of expansion.

Heathrow Expansion, National Policy and local Planning Authorities

7. The government has acknowledged that airport capacity in the south east is a question of national significance. It has set in train the processes by which the decision whether or not to approve expansion will be taken; and if it is to proceed, the process by which the details of the expansion plan will be determined. TVB LEP, along with neighbouring LEPs and Planning Authorities, has supported the formation of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group, of which Slough BC is now the lead authority.

Heathrow Strategic Planning Group

8. This is a “Duty to Co-operate” grouping which supports the need for a reliable evidence base to inform a co-ordinated response. It includes organisations with a range of attitudes to expansion; what unites the Group is a need for a common view about the need to realise the benefits of an expanded Airport as well as a shared analysis of the expansion proposals.
9. HSPG has a memorandum of cooperation with Heathrow Airport Limited, and some of the costs involved with responding to HAL’s requests for information are met by HAL. Government grant has been secured. Detailed comments will be communicated through the work of the HSPG.

Publications and Evidence Base

10. Heathrow Airport dominates the economy of the “Western Wedge” area from west London out along the M40, the Chiltern Mainline, the M4, the Great Western mainline, the M3, and South Western Mainline.
11. We have commissioned and published a number of studies, with our partners and in our own name, that provide the evidence base for our support for continued investment in the capacity of the airport. The conclusion we have reached is that on-, near- and off-airport infrastructure needs to be well planned and co-ordinated in order to reap the maximum benefits for the local economy, and to minimise the negative impact on local communities. We have concluded that rail surface access to airport is the most pressing problem, both now and following any expansion.

Surface Access Proposals

12. TVB LEP’s number one infrastructure investment priority is the Western Rail Link to Heathrow scheme. The Strategic Outline Business Case supports this investment on the basis of a two-runway airport; this view was endorsed by the Airports Commission report.
13. This view is shared by the Berkshire Members Strategic Planning Group who in their response to the draft London Plan noted, *“The Plan should emphasise the need for western and southern rail access to Heathrow **now**; they are already necessary to tackle existing transport and air quality problems, and should be implemented for the current two-runway configuration rather than as a by-product of expansion, should it happen”*
14. The LEP provides the secretariat for the WRLtH Stakeholder Steering Group, co-chaired by Tan Dhesi MP (Lab, Slough) and Richard Benyon MP (Con, Newbury) and we are working closely with the Network Rail

team promoting the Development Consent Order application for this scheme, due to be submitted in late 2019.

15. We are aware of other proposals for step-change investment in public transport to and from the airport, and in the area around it, including Southern Rail Access to Heathrow; Slough Rapid Transit Phase 2; West London Orbital Rail; Piccadilly Line upgrade, Old Oak Common Interchange; and the M25 South West Quadrant study.

ⁱⁱ<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/getfile/Public%20Documents/Programmes/Infrastructure/Heathrow/Heathrow%20Economic%20Impact%20Assessment%20-%20Final%20Report%20September%202013.pdf?inline-view=true>