



FRAMEWORK STATEMENT

Guidance

The following offers a framework to adapt to the context of your company. It offers an opportunity to be specific about regional benefits and company benefits and there are sections enclosed in [] from which you can select. However, you may simply wish to adopt Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and the last.

Whether written as a statement or letter, please return to Jess Harrison via email: jessharrison@tvchamber.co.uk. If written as a letter, the addressee should be Paul Britton, Chief Executive, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce. We have been advised not to inundate Government but to compile a file of statements to present to Government.

Outside the Thames Valley?

If you are a business or organisation based outside the Thames Valley and in the many benefitting regions, you will also gain significant benefits from the rail link. You will wish to tailor paragraphs 3 and 4 to your local circumstance and make a few adjustments to other paragraphs. If you wish to receive advice on journey time improvements or on other changes relevant to you, please contact Jess Harrison, as above.

Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH)

Improving Rail Links to Heathrow from the West and Beyond

[Company name] are in full support of the proposed Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) and of the cross-regional campaign for its early delivery under the leadership of Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce.

[Company name] is based in [the Thames Valley/Oxford/Reading etc etc] and [indication of sector and scale of operation]

The considerable economic and environmental benefits WRLtH will bring to UK plc, to many regions, many thousands of businesses and nearly 14 million people in the benefitting area are well-documented. We ask Government to consider these and particularly the added value to UK plc to be gained in the Thames Valley, the UK's fastest-growing region outside London, home to the world's best University, the most productive town per capita and the number one region outside London for attracting inward investment.

[Company name] will benefit from a more frequent, reliable and more direct route to Heathrow airport. In particular, we will benefit from

[Select from one of the following:

- direct rail access to Heathrow and a journey time of 7 minutes from Slough station
- direct rail access to Heathrow and a journey time of 25 minutes from Reading station
- a journey time reduction of at least 30 mins
- Swindon/Oxford/Didcot being brought within the "golden hour" for foreign direct investment]

We believe that WRLtH will sustain and grow our business, securing and increasing employment and contributing to national GVA. In particular it will:

[select and amend one or more of the following examples:

Create opportunities for growth

Increase our company's appeal to inward investors, particularly foreign direct investors

Retain and attract valuable tenants so sustaining the regional economy

Improve our trade links, particularly

Enhance our opportunity to move high value freight via Heathrow

Create opportunities for regeneration and development around stations]

We are also aware that the link will bring other benefits to the Thames Valley region. It will

- Remove road passengers from our major roads, so reducing congestion and pollution and contributing to the UK's climate change targets
- Increase the attractiveness of our tourism areas to overseas visitors
- Increase the attractiveness of our Universities for international research partnerships and to overseas students.

We believe that delivery of a project with such a strong environmental, commercial and economic case, and which will rapidly repay the investment, is essential to our national economy at such a period of change. We understand that the project was adopted by Government in 2012, is at an advanced stage of development and facing critical decisions in the next few months. We urge Government to give a swift and firm commitment to WRLtH and so secure the economic and environmental benefits to UK plc, to the Thames Valley and to the nearly 14 million people and many thousands of businesses in the benefitting area.