

13th June 2019

Aviation Strategy
Department for Transport
33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR

Submitted via email: AviationStrategy@dft.gov.uk

To whom it may concern,

Aviation 2050: The future of UK aviation – a consultation (Cm9714)

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above consultation document. We respond on behalf of an organisation – the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC). For further details on TVCC see the 'About the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce' section below.

We note that it is a comprehensive document which covers a wide range of relevant subject matter and strategic detail. We are working alongside the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and contributing to a more detailed, national, response to the overall document and its content. This will include, as appropriate, a more direct response to the consultation questions. The following comments are more specific to the Thames Valley, but should be taken in the context of our input into the BCC response.

TVCC's Business Manifesto

On November 30th 2018 we published our [Business Manifesto](#) for 2019. The second annual statement of its kind, developed in consultation with our membership, it sets out the opportunities and challenges our membership want to champion and which we believe will have the most impact. It commits TVCC, a politically neutral organisation, to lead, support and campaign for a programme of activity across the region in 2019. Importantly, it outlines our continued support for two very important priorities for our business community that are of relevance to the future of UK aviation and the Aviation 2050 consultation. We set out four main priorities, on which TVCC will focus and these include:

- Provide a business solution to securing the commitment, funding and delivery of the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH).
- Maintain the momentum behind delivering expansion, including the 3rd runway, at London Heathrow (LHR).

We also encourage you to review TVCC's responses to related aviation consultations available [HERE](#). These provide a recent history of our comments and views of our membership relevant to a range of areas covered in your consultation and outlined below.

We bring together our business community regularly to discuss and update them on these priorities. For example, our Business Manifesto Advisory Group (BMAG) meets quarterly and you have an open invitation to attend and participate in this Group and update our membership on progress with the consultation. You may be interested to note that our meeting on 10th July is focused on Heathrow and we extend an invitation for you/a representative to attend.

Our comments on the Aviation Consultation

- We commend the Government in its support for the expansion of LHR airport, including its 3rd runway (e.g. see sections 1.3/1.21/3.6 and the airport NPS). We encourage continued and sustained efforts for the timely delivery of this project, and that the project meets all environmental concerns and builds in the highest possible standards of sustainable and energy efficiency for the lifetime of the project (from construction through to operation and any future decommissioning or subsequent redevelopment).
 - LHR is the UK's only hub airport and, as stated in sections 1.5/1.14/4.8, carries a very large proportion of business passengers and will help deliver the extra connectivity (including domestic air connectivity) the UK needs to help secure our economic future post-BREXIT.
 - LHR acts as THE key driver of inward investment and trade (referenced in the foreword and, for example, sections 2.41 and 4.45 onwards) for much of the UK economy (notably in London and the South East), with much of foreign direct investment (FDI) attracted into the UK and these regions because of access to and connectivity from LHR. We are encouraged by references to and acknowledgement of the importance of the airport, now and in the future, as a contributory factor to the success of UK plc – BUT emphasise the need for stronger narrative in/around its importance as a driver of FDI (inward investment) as well (the only reference to inward investment is in section 4.5 of the Manchester case study). We can help provide a case study if this is welcome and provide additional evidence as requested in the consultation questions after section 2.57.
 - Notwithstanding the serious environmental impacts that must be considered and placed at the forefront of any decision, appropriate, sustainable, growth of LHR, and other regional airports (see section 3.0) is encouraged to drive economic growth and prosperity. Whilst supporting the expansion of LHR we have consistently supported the need for additional capacity at other London airports, notably Gatwick. We welcome the Strategy's acknowledgement of the national shortfall of capacity by 2030, even with an expanded Heathrow, and the intent to increase national capacity.
- Building a global, connected Britain (section 2.0)
 - We commend the aims and objectives to help ensure Britain remains competitive and connected to existing, new and emerging markets. Aviation clearly has and will continue to have an important role in helping drive the sustained economic growth and prosperity of UK plc to 2050 and beyond.
 - As one of the most successful regions, outside of London, for attracting FDI and delivering trade services the Thames Valley is important. The region is also a net contributor to the Exchequer and, through the success of its business community, is enabling Government to invest and deliver UK-wide prosperity. Aviation 2050 must recognise the importance of the Thames Valley and support the widest programme that invests in its success and allows business to do what it does best. Support for LHR expansion and the WRLtH are two important infrastructure components.
- Regional connectivity (section 4.6 onwards) refers to the contribution rail is making to the overall movement of (passenger) traffic (see sections 4.8/4.10) and should – rightly – be accounted for in the aviation plan. Further:
 - Clear relevant infrastructure investment and franchise timetables (see section 4.37 for example). We have previously made clear our comments on the [GWR franchise](#). In the context of this document,

where appropriate and on a case by case basis, we are advocates of extending the local franchise and giving the operator the necessary commitment to enable the long term investment in rail services, stock and infrastructure. This will help deliver the broader regional connectivity aims and objectives outlined.

- Funding (section 4.41 onwards) and airport surface transport. See our comments relating to WRLtH immediately below.
- [Western Rail Link to London Heathrow](#): In the context of the above comments (notably regional connectivity) and the references throughout the document (chapters 3,4 and 5) to the need for and environmental benefits of effective surface access, we are disappointed not to read/see any reference to this project. We would strongly suggest that the timely delivery (including commitment to fund) of WRLtH, the strong commercial and economic case for which is based on a two-runway model, is a fundamental component of any Aviation 2050 plan and its widest aims and objectives (inc. public transport, access, sustainability, environmental and energy efficiency). For these reasons we would recommend the report includes explicit reference to and more details on WRLtH, including a clear commitment to fund and deliver the project as one of its core components (ref: consultation question no:6 after section 2.57).

About the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC)

TVCC is one of the largest accredited Chambers within the UK and the only accredited Chamber of Commerce for the Thames Valley region. TVCC is a proven centre of excellence for trade and inward investment services.

Representing over 4,000 companies in membership, it is home to over 115,000 businesses, including: 11 of the world's top 15 tech companies; the No.1 University in the world (Oxford); fastest growing city (Reading) in the UK (EY); once again, the two highest performing cities (Oxford and Reading) according to PwC; the second largest trading city in the UK (Slough); the most productive city per capita (Slough) (Centre for Cities) and the No.1 region, outside of London, for attracting inward investment. In addition, TVCC credits a range of impressive statistics:

- 295,000 combined number of staff employed by members;
- 5000+ number of active trade customers;
- £1,692,474,094– the value of international trade enabled in 2018;
- Average 150 new trade customers each year;
- 178 countries trading with our customers;
- 83 sectors represented by members and international trade customers;
- Consistently one of the UK's most attractive locations for attracting inward investment;
- 65% of international companies setting up or expanding in the Thames Valley have been supported by TVCC.

Thank you once again for giving us the opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully,



Paul Britton
Chief Executive