



8<sup>th</sup> January 2016

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### **Unite note to National Infrastructure Commission Calls for Evidence: transport**

This note is submitted by Unite the Union. Unite is the UK's largest trade union with over 1.4 million members across all sectors of the economy including transport, manufacturing, energy and utilities, construction, metals and foundries, information technology, food and agriculture, financial services, health, local government and the not for profit sectors.

Unite is unable to respond to the three separate calls for evidence, not least on account of the tight timescale given - effectively eight weeks including the Christmas period. This is not a suitable consultation period.

We are happy to engage further with the Commission on further points of detail in future. But we would like to draw the Commission's attention to the following:

- In our submission to the Department for Transport's Maritime Growth Study we argued that in the short term, the west coast of the UK will have a greater growth potential than the east coast and that the opening of Port Salford and Liverpool 2 will provide Manchester and its surrounding area with the manufacturing opportunities.<sup>1</sup>
- In our submission to the Airports Commission discussion paper on utilisation of the UK's existing airport capacity we pointed out that since Manchester has opened its second runway, it has obtained more interest from airlines in developing routes. As a result a greater number of passengers are flying into Manchester as opposed to London, in

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<sup>1</sup><https://api.groupdocs.com/v2.0/shared/files/fe52acd00773ad9a77b0204d364315c77bdeb8c7678e13a07825a5924bf65a91?render=true>

order to connect to longer haul routes. This shows that the airport has the potential to become a regional hub.<sup>2</sup>

- Bus lanes are a vital part of public transport in London. They allow for the travelling public to choose a speedy and reliable form of surface transport that helps the environment supports business and encourages tourists to use a convenient and popular alternative to the private car. Without bus lanes congestion and pollution would increase. TfL & local councils should continue to expand bus lane availability where appropriate between 7am to 7pm. Access should be available to buses, taxis and coaches on all existing and new bus lanes. New road schemes should allow for access for all three transport modes mentioned above.

As the UK's largest transport union we want to draw the Commission's attention to the importance of investment in transport infrastructure.

We have recently published an updated version of Unite's 'Strategy for Transport'<sup>3</sup> which goes into more detail, but key points include the importance of the Government:

- investing immediately in modernising our transport infrastructure system to boost productivity and build a sustainable economy;
- delivering in a sustainable and accessible way on commitments made for the high speed rail network;
- delivering on the Crossrail project, which will be essential to the development of London's prosperity and competitiveness;
- ensuring an effective hub airport in an environmentally sustainable manner and addressing the lack of airport capacity in London and the South East by acting swiftly on the Airports Commission recommendation for a new runway at Heathrow.

The Prime Minister has acknowledged the importance of transport infrastructure for growth saying: "without world-class transport we will not get growth; people won't invest in here; and regions in decline will be left further behind."<sup>4</sup>

We believe that investing in infrastructure projects now, such as modernising the UK's transport system, would boost growth in the short term and increase potential economic output over the longer term. Research shows that this would have a small impact on long-term debt and with even a modest impact on productivity, would effectively pay for itself.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup><https://api.groupdocs.com/v2.0/shared/files/f5c930bb69c2f8d2ed6d1f905e4f7a1df4505bd141d83baf79a20809cab2bbd5?render=true>

<sup>3</sup> Available at [http://www.unitetheunion.org/uploaded/documents/Transport%20Matters%20-%20a%20Unite%20strategy%20for%20transport%20\(updated%20December%202015\)11-24947.pdf](http://www.unitetheunion.org/uploaded/documents/Transport%20Matters%20-%20a%20Unite%20strategy%20for%20transport%20(updated%20December%202015)11-24947.pdf) and pdf copy e-mailed to Commission with this note.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-speech-on-infrastructure>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/tucfiles/infrastructure\\_spending.pdf](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/tucfiles/infrastructure_spending.pdf)

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