

TravelWatch NORTHWEST

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promoting quality public transport.....

Transport Committee
 House of Commons
 London SW1A 0AA

21st March 2017

Dear Committee Members,

The Airports National Policy Statement

1. TravelWatch NorthWest is an independent Community Interest Company representing all public transport users in North West England. We are pleased to give our views to this inquiry.

2. This inquiry relates to airport capacity in the South East. We confine our comments to links between the North West and existing South East airports. We advocate better rail connections than now exist partly as this will bring significant environmental benefits over domestic air and road. Studies have shown that Rail is much less CO2 intensive than air (or road). Indeed, we decry the current lack of vision to introduce through Eurostar services from Manchester to Amsterdam, Cologne or Brussels for example.

3 Access to/from Heathrow, Gatwick & other airports in the South East from our region is poor, in many cases requiring the need to stay overnight. These two airports serve many destinations, particularly long haul, not served by other airports. With regard to Heathrow, if it is to be our major UK airport, the lack of fast overland transport other than to London is unacceptable. The reinstatement of the HS2 Heathrow link would allow regular through services not only to/from the Midlands and NW but also to/from Northern European cities giving fast access to City Centres for overseas arrivals without a painful change of planes and then a second journey to the appropriate city centre from another airport.

4. Gatwick used to be served by a direct train service from the NW which was well patronised as it allowed travel to many SE destinations only otherwise accessible by a gruelling journey with luggage across London. The reintroduction of this service would be a considerable benefit. Surface public transport access from our region to Stansted/Luton Airports which have many cheap flights is also poor.

5. Ideally a ring rail around London linking all SE main airports and cross connections with main rail lines would make an alternative access other than by road a lot easier and more environmentally and bulk people movement friendly from all directions.

I hope this is helpful and thank you for the opportunity to respond

Yours faithfully

John A Moorhouse

John Moorhouse
Company Secretary