railfuture

*Campaigning for better services
over a bigger rail network*

please reply to:

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Transport Strategy
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2024-02-05

Dear Peninsula Transport,

draft Transport Strategy – Strategic Transport Priorities to 2050

Railfuture's Devon & Cornwall and Severnside regional branches welcome the public consultation on the sub-national transport body's draft Transport Strategy – Strategic Transport Priorities to 2050, and offer their joint view and specific contributions to Q5 below.

Railfuture is Britain's leading, longest-established, independent national voluntary organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities. We seek to influence decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in transport and development planning.

Q1. What do you think of the Peninsula Transport Strategy?
Strongly support. It is imperative to have a single, unified articulation of the case for sustained investment to meet the region's ever-evolving transport needs in support of its socio-economic and environmental ambitions across the next quarter of the 21st century.

Q2. When considering transportation needs, to what extent do you support the four priority outcomes set out in the strategy?
Easier Journeys – Strongly support.
Going Electric – Support.
A Connected Peninsula – Strongly support.
Completing the Transport Network – Strongly support.

Q3. When considering how Peninsula Transport delivers the strategy to 2030, to what extent do you support the proposals set out under each area of transport?
Walking and Wheeling: Walking and cycling enhancements at public transport hubs – Strongly support
Bus and Coach: Integrated timetabling, ticketing and information – Strongly support.
Rail: Service enhancements, new stations and resilience schemes continuing to progress – Strongly support.
Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure: Expanding the EV charging network including in rural areas, to meet forecast demand – Support.
Roads: Enhancement, safety and maintenance schemes on the major and strategic road networks – Neutral.
Airports and Ports: Improved surface access to airports and ports for passengers and freight – Support.
Digital, Technology and other Enablers: EV demand forecasting, carbon quantification and other technical support to local authorities – Support.
Digital, Technology and other Enablers: Delivery of pilot schemes in freight and rural mobility – Support.

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Q4. Looking at the challenges, priority outcomes and proposals, is there anything that you feel is missing from the Transport Strategy?

Yes. An explicit commitment to modal shift, away from over-reliance on road vehicles, however powered and controlled, and including both passenger and freight / logistics transport. That is for us the golden thread to address 'The risks of Business as Usual' mentioned in the Economic Connectivity Study, in order to address the risks associated with traffic congestion and carbon dioxide emissions (and not over-looking 'the Oslo Effect' – the pollutants of micro-particulates from road vehicles and highway surfaces which find their way into the air, land and watercourses and which are very likely to increase as a result of the extra weight of electric road vehicles).

Q5. Do you have any comments on the draft Peninsula Transport Strategy? (250 words)

\# Single Voice for Regional Transport – central government departments, potential funders, must see consistent if evolving continuity in regional strategy. Pre-dating Peninsula Transport, aftermath of the 2014 Dawlish trauma saw Peninsula Rail Task Force lay foundations in 2016 with *Closing the Gap*, followed by Peninsula Transport's 2021 *Vision*. This post-pandemic Transport Strategy must echo those themes while translating to government regional ambitions and priorities recognising changed circumstances for the second quarter of the 21st-century.

\# Unique Challenges – 'Alternative fuel infrastructure' applies no less to rail as to road; 'Going Electric' must include lobbying, with Western Gateway, for extension of mainline rail electrification as far as Plymouth, from Bristol Parkway and from Newbury, by 2050.

\# Unique Challenges – 'Rail Connectivity' under-achieving is intra-regional ('most travel is local' viz. Devon Metro and now Mid-Cornwall Metro), as well as inter-regional.

\# Strategy for the User – 'Rail' is uniquely-placed to expand long-term transport capacity, connectivity and user choice (passenger and freight / logistics) to address congestion, carbon and economic outcomes. Add 'new links' eg Tavistock by 2030, Bideford by 2040.

\# Our Immediate Priorities / First Steps Towards Our Outcomes:

~ Easier Journeys – more opportunities to travel by rail through raised service frequencies;

~ Going Electric – extend to new rail as well as road vehicles eg battery option;

~ Connected Peninsula – rail network enhancements for intra- as well as inter-regional links;

~ Completed Network – success looks like road vehicle volumes stable / declining while increased travel demand absorbed through mode shift, especially to rail.

What type of organisation do you represent?
Other stakeholder

How big is your organisation?
Small - fewer than 10 employees (ie none)

What is your postcode? (or leave blank if prefer not to say)
EX15 5LR

How did you hear about this consultation? (Max. 250 letters)
Email, LinkedIn, social media.

If you would like to be kept informed about the Peninsula Transport Strategy and the work of the Peninsula Transport STB, please provide your details below for our mailing list.
Details provided at top.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Clark
Railfuture
Secretary, Devon & Cornwall regional branch

draft Transport Strategy – Strategic Transport Priorities to 2050