

Subject: Response from Reading Borough Council

Reading Borough Council (Southeast UK) would like to make the following response to the TEN-T consultation questions:

The principles and criteria for designing the core network do seem adequate and practical, in terms of ensuring continuity for ongoing projects, removing key bottlenecks, building on existing infrastructure, etc. We also agree that a 'network' rather than 'projects' is a more holistic approach. However, we would like to know what the term 'supplementary infrastructure' refers to and would argue for more consideration of the role of 'intermediate nodes' to enable shorter, more direct journeys.

Specifically, Reading Station is an intermediate node that enables 'intermodal transfers' and links between 'international transport, regional and local transport' and is the gateway between Wales, West and Southwest England to Heathrow and London. It could form an intermediate node on the core network, to 'bundle traffic flows' and 'increase efficiency and sustainability', as it eliminates the need for longer, less direct journeys (e.g. going into London to access Heathrow). Supplementary infrastructure should be prioritised to build on existing capacity improvements and should include ITS and ticketing improvements and will have a greater contribution if intermodal journeys are incorporated (e.g. rail-bus-air).

TEN-T planning should incentivise or reward projects which meet and increase the profile of the strategic objectives and look for projects which enable cross-cutting implementation of the goals (e.g. improve both innovation and sustainability).

We believe TEN-T has seen funding inefficiencies and delivery delays due to inflexibilities around pooling funding, cost overruns and investing in projects before they have reached the most appropriate stage of development. We would therefore suggest some sort of tracking tool is used to 'rank' authorities/projects that have been previously funded against delivery, and take this into account in future bids. This could all form part of a future funding framework, along with more consideration of project development costs, assistance in coordinating funding sources and identifying gaps in funding full projects.

We hope that any new legal framework clarifies responsibilities for all parties in order to provide parameters within which action can be more flexible.

We are happy to be contacted to clarify or discuss further.

Regards,
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