

please reply to:

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Strategic Transport Team
Hampshire County Council

Dear Sirs

The Wessex Branch of Railfuture is grateful for the opportunity to comment on Hampshire County Council's draft Local Transport Plan, LTP4. Our branch area covers essentially Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight.

Railfuture is Britain's leading, longest-established, national independent voluntary organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support economic 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.

Comments on Hampshire County Council's draft Local Transport Plan LTP4

Railfuture supports the overall *Vision* expressed at the start of the Local Transport Plan document. We also support individual policies set out in the Plan that will encourage the use of public transport. Furthermore, we fully support targeted investment in rail infrastructure and services.

In our commentary below, we have endeavoured to identify further opportunities for growing rail patronage and achieving the policy objectives of the Council through railway investment.

Reference	Comments
Page 50	The draft LTP says "...the pathway to low carbon freight vehicles is complicated and unclear, and ... [there] will not be a viable mass-market solution for HGVs." This should be contrasted with the fact that low carbon freight on rail is already established and well-proven, consequently a low-carbon future can be achieved by modal shift to rail.
Page 52, Fig 11b	In a footnote to the diagram, it could be pointed out that 100% of roadspace is released if everyone is on a train!
Page 61, item 9	Reference to "reallocation of internal space within buses ... needs of wheelchair users and families with pushchairs" should also include trains, where the scope to reallocate space is much greater.
Page 62	In addition to the measures listed, the Council needs to be aware of new developments in rail freight and identify new opportunities for the transfer of freight from road to rail. For example, there are trials underway involving the carriage of palletised goods by express multiple units to stations on the rail network for onward transport by local couriers.

Page 63	<p>The Council needs to be mindful of all rail freight corridors and terminals in the County, not just those listed. For example: container trains to/from Southampton are routed via either Winchester or Salisbury; there are regular flows of aggregates to Fareham yard; there is occasional MoD traffic to/from Marchwood. Furthermore, there are opportunities for additional flows of oils, minerals and waste by rail in the County, and the possibility of freight to/from Portsmouth International Port using the freight transfer siding at Fratton.</p>
Page 85	<p>We strongly support the extension of ticketing schemes such as the <i>Solent Go</i> travelcard to include rail services. Tourists in particular need a single, simple-to-understand product for access to all modes of public transport.</p>
Page 86	<p>As well as being “reliable, frequent, fast and connected” the infrastructure needed for public transport journeys should be “welcoming, convenient, safe and secure”. In that respect, facilities at many of the County’s railway stations are woefully inadequate, in particular: lack of car parking spaces and secure cycle storage, difficult access to platforms, poor waiting facilities, no toilets or toilets locked out of use. Some examples...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamble station remains little more than a wayside halt despite having an ever-growing catchment population, and both commercial and leisure facilities nearby. • A wholesale improvement of facilities at Botley could enable it to become a gateway station for North Whiteley. • Stations with inadequate car parking include Shawford and Micheldever. • Waiting shelters at Petersfield are inadequate. <p>There should be an audit of facilities at stations and an agreed programme to address deficiencies.</p>
Page 87	<p>Re: item a) the Council needs to bear in mind that the Eclipse busway was constructed with a view to possible conversion to a rail-based rapid transit system at some later date, and that it is entirely possible for rubber-tyre vehicles to share roadspace with trams along the Fareham-Gosport corridor.</p> <p>Re: item c) “Improve access to/from rail services”. We strongly support this and know of many locations where the walking route between the railway station and other amenities needs improving. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Fareham Station, there should be a walkway alongside the railway bridge for level access across the A27 to the westbound (Eclipse) bus stop. • At Swanwick station, there needs to be a foot/cycle bridge over the M27 to a designated Whiteley park & ride site, also a foot/cycleway to Park Gate. <p>Good links to foot/cycle paths networks and secure storage for cycles at stations are key to the policy of “increasing the reach of public transport services”. Easy bus-rail interchange is also very important.</p>
Page 91	<p>Re: “Transition to Low/Zero emission”. There should be recognition here that a low/zero emission transport network already exists, namely the County’s electrified rail network. Consequently this policy would be partly achieved by modal shift to rail.</p> <p>However, there are still far too many diesel services operating over electrified lines in the South, most notably loco-hauled freight and CrossCountry trains, so the Council would need to press for power supply upgrades and hybrid-powered rail vehicles.</p>

Page 92	<p>Mention is made of encouraging take up of EVs by taxi operators. We suggest there could be a beacon project at a busy station taxi rank with measures to ensure taxis can be charged while maintaining their first-in-first-out priority on the rank, either via a “next taxi” indicator or an innovative charging mechanism.</p> <p>Mention is also made of electric bike charging facilities, and these would be particularly useful at railway stations, where electric bike usage can greatly enlarge the catchment area of the station.</p>
Page 103, 3rd col, 1st para	<p>The Council needs to work with both bus <u>and train</u> operators to improve facilities for the carriage of cycles.</p>
Page 115	<p>We strongly support better connectivity between railway stations in Hampshire and the rest of Britain. In recent months we have lost direct trains to the North East. Also services to the Midlands and along the Coastway route have been severely reduced. Furthermore, the GWR service to/from Bristol and Cardiff has deteriorated substantially and should be upgraded to Inter-City status (there are 7 cities along the route).</p> <p>As well as restoring recently-lost connections, we would like to see direct rail services restored with the South West and with Scotland, at least on summer Saturdays. Through services using good-quality rolling stock could be provided by Open Access operators, and the Council should ensure that such services remain a viable proposition in the new Great British Railways environment.</p>
Page 116	<p>While we strongly support all the “strategic rail improvements” listed, we question the practicality of a “4-track railway between London and Southampton”. We recommend instead “incremental improvements to address capacity constraints”. Much can be achieved with measures such as modern digital signalling, additional passing loops, bi-directional working and grade-separated junctions.</p> <p>We agree that the Basingstoke-Reading line is a No 1 priority for electrification in Hampshire. We suggest that the West of England line west from Basingstoke should be a close second, not the least because the current Class 159 diesel units are fast becoming life expired.</p> <p>There are a number of schemes being examined by Network Rail, and the Council should press for early implementation, most notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional track(s) through Havant for operational flexibility. • At Fareham station, reconnection of the bay platform road at the Portsmouth end to allow through working (enables faster service to overtake stopping train). • Redoubling the line between Fareham Tunnel and Botley. • Measures to enable more services (esp. West Coastway) to call at Southampton Airport Parkway. <p>We want to see the building of a railway station at Welborne north of Fareham at the start of the housing development so that new residents don’t become dependent on car use. A new station at Welborne should be included in the list of strategic rail improvements for Hampshire.</p> <p>The Council needs to quantify the service improvements it wants to see across Hampshire over the plan period (eg: minimum of 3 trains/hour in the Solent Metro area), then seek infrastructure improvements that will achieve that goal.</p>

Page 128	<p>National funding streams are mentioned in respect of highways and road vehicles, but the Council should also be mindful of all funding streams for railway infrastructure and services that become available during the plan period. Currently examples of railway funding are: Restoring Your Railways, New Station and Access for All funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunities for new stations in Hampshire include: Welborne, Chineham, West Leigh, Ampress (Lymington) and Halterworth (Romsey).• Opportunities for line reopenings in Hampshire include: Waterside Line, Brockenhurst-Ringwood, Andover-Weyhill-Ludgershall.• Opportunities for light rail transit in Hampshire include: Fareham-Gosport-Portsmouth, Bentley-Whitehill/Bordon, Havant-Hayling Is. <p>We appreciate that the business case for some of the above schemes is currently poor, but the pendulum can swing in favour of rail following housing/commercial development proposals or changes in Government policy, as we've discovered with the Waterside Line.</p> <p>The Council should consider creating a rail (or a general transport) infrastructure fund where developments within a certain distance of a rail line/station are levied a specific sum to pay for infrastructure improvements, very much on the basis of the successful Solent Mitigation Fund.</p>
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In conclusion: There are currently many threats facing Britain's railways, but there is also a multitude of opportunities for rail development in Hampshire which will support many of the Council's transport priorities. Elsewhere in England, metro mayors together with their teams of transport professionals are vying for funding to achieve their transport goals and there is a risk that Hampshire's needs will be overlooked. Now, more than ever, the Council needs to employ a "Railway Tsar" to keep abreast of developments, fight Hampshire's corner and make sure that the South is not left behind.

Thank you for giving our comments due consideration.

Yours sincerely

Tony Smale

A D Smale, Secretary, Railfuture Wessex

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