

Thank you for inviting Transport for the South East (TfSE) to comment on your Issues and Opportunities for the Strategic Transport Plan 2025 – 2050 document, for the Western Gateway Region.

TfSE is a sub-national transport body that brings together 16 local transport authorities, five LEAs, 46 district and borough authorities, protected landscapes and other stakeholders to speak with one voice on the infrastructure priorities for the area, focusing on the best ways of introducing innovation in our transport network.

The South East is a powerful motor for national prosperity, covering six local authorities which include 8.3 million residents and more than 300,000 businesses. It adds more than £200 billion a year to the UK economy, through the two largest UK airports, many of its busiest motorways, a string of major ports and crucial links to London, the rest of Britain and to Europe. Our aim is to transform the South East to a world leading region for sustainable economic growth, improving the lives of residents, businesses and visitors to our area. We have developed a [Transport Strategy](#) and a [Strategic Investment Plan](#) for the region.

Taking the specific questions you have asked in turn;

Do you agree we have identified the key issues our region is facing? Are there any other issues that you think need to be addressed?

As a neighbouring STB, TfSE are not as familiar with the issues in the Western Gateway region. As such it is difficult for us to answer this question with authority.

TfSE are members of the M4 to Dorset coast steering group and sit within 3 of the 4 proposed strategic transport corridors. The Solent Ports sit adjacent to the Western Gateway area and within the Midlands to South Coast corridor. With potential expansion of Southampton improving connectivity with the Midlands and the west of England would be of benefit.

TfSE share many of the common issues and sub issues that you outline in the paper, including those around:

- Decarbonisation
- Rural journeys & connectivity
- Freight (and other vehicle) emissions
- Road congestion
- Seaports & airports
- Levelling up & deprivation

Please rank the issues in order of what you consider to be the priority in our region

It is not possible for us to answer this question as we are not located in your region. However, our recent public consultation on our Strategic Investment Plan showed that the priorities for TfSE stakeholders (in no particular order) are:

- Decarbonisation & the environment; including achieving net zero and reducing the reliance on private cars
- Public transport; including calls for reduced fares, improved connectivity between modes and improvements to network and reliability
- Active travel; including calls to prioritise active travel over other modes and improvements to active travel infrastructure

- Connectivity; including improvements to orbital and east-west connectivity and between coastal communities
- Rural transport; including requests for improved connectivity within and between rural communities

Do you agree we have identified the right range of opportunities? Are there other opportunities you think we should consider? Please rank the opportunities in order of your preferred priority.

It would not be appropriate for TfSE to comment on the opportunities in a different area as we do not have adequate local knowledge. However the list of national and local opportunities you provide align with those that have been identified by TfSE in our own region and Strategic Investment Plan.

Please let us know any other views you have on the issues and opportunities we have outlined

There is little mention of economic (improving productivity and attracting investment) and social (improving the health, safety and wellbeing for everyone) objectives in your paper and it may be worth providing some strengthened narrative in these areas.

We recognise that this paper represents the earliest stage of your engagement process and look forward to being involved further as your plans progress.