



**HAMPSHIRE**  
chamber of commerce

**A powerful voice for your business**

HAMPSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SUPPORT FOR THE  
HIGH SPEED RAIL NETWORK PROPOSALS - HS2  
JULY 2011

Hampshire Chamber of Commerce was a signatory to the open letter in July 2011 from David Frost, Director General, British Chambers of Commerce. It expressed support from business for the HS2 proposals to create a national high speed rail network to provide desperately needed rail capacity, new jobs, increased connectivity and the balancing of our economy. As one of the largest business representative groups in the UK, we would like to add to this by submitting the comments below from our perspective here in the south of England.

To date this year 37 Local Enterprise Partnerships have been formed with the initiative of the business community to help rebalance the economy and boost business growth in these functioning economic areas, two of which are in Hampshire – Enterprise M3 LEP and the Solent LEP. Fast, reliable transport connections between these areas and major cities must be ensured for the future and the HS2 north/south high speed rail route is an integral part of this.

Southampton is regarded as an international transport hub, being the cruise ship capital of the UK and having the second largest container terminal in the UK (DP World). The West Coast Main Line is expected to reach full capacity in seven or eight years. HS2 will relieve capacity on the West Coast Main Line for both passenger and freight services, which is important for freight movements to and from the Port of Southampton as they use this Line for part of the journey.

HS2 would reduce the journey time for rail passengers travelling between Southampton and Hampshire to the North of England. The proposed HS2 high speed rail link into Heathrow also highlights the need to provide direct rail links from Heathrow to the west, as would have been provided by the recently scrapped Airtrack scheme. These links would allow people to access the HS2 from Southampton/Hampshire without having to travel through the congestion in London.

Another congested travel route from the south is through the West Midlands to destinations further north like Manchester. Completion of East West Rail will provide a direct link from Oxford to Bletchley and allow freight and passenger services to bypass the congested West Midlands.

Jimmy Chestnutt  
Chief Executive

**Hampshire Chamber of Commerce** is the Independent Voice of Local Business across the county and is one of the largest business representational groups in the UK. It brings together the combined influence, strength and expertise of the county's three former major Chambers of Commerce. This substantial business network engages businesses of all sizes and in all sectors whether throughout Hampshire, or in more focused local groupings, as and when required for areas like the Solent LEP, Enterprise M3 LEP, South Hampshire, the New Forest, North or East Hampshire, main towns or the two city regions of Portsmouth and Southampton.