

West London and Thames Valley Businesses are bullish on infrastructure improvements

According to a survey conducted by publishing and events firm 3Fox International, working with Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and West London Business, companies located in west London and the Thames Valley are very optimistic about the impact of major infrastructure upgrades taking place in the region.

Of the infrastructure investments planned and underway, the Elizabeth Line will be most beneficial, respondents believe: 91% said the new line will have a positive impact on their business, and 100% said it will be positive for the region.

The survey was conducted as part of the first ever WOW London Conference, which took place on 22 November in Slough.

The poll was conducted among 30 organisations doing business in the region. It asked participants how they perceive the impact of eight new infrastructure projects on their own business, as well as the region as a whole. The projects included HS2, the Elizabeth Line and a third runway at Heathrow airport. The results are below in tables 1 and 2, below.

Table 1

	Perceived impact on business		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Elizabeth Line	91%	9%	0%
HS2	71%	29%	0%
Third runway at Heathrow	77%	23%	0%
West London Orbital Railway	64%	36%	0%
Brentford - Southall railway	63%	37%	0%
Western Rail Link to Heathrow	64%	36%	0%
Heathrow Southern Railway	75%	25%	0%
M4 Smart Motorway	59%	41%	0%

Table 2

	Perceived impact on region		
	positive	neutral	negative
Elizabeth Line	100%	0%	0%
HS2	77%	17%	6%
Third runway at Heathrow	90%	0%	10%
West London Orbital Railway	80%	20%	0%
Brentford - Southall railway	70%	30%	0%
Western Rail Link to Heathrow	80%	15%	5%
Heathrow Southern Railway	82%	12%	6%
M4 Smart Motorway	70%	30%	0%



Of the eight projects, the proposed M4 Smart Motorway upgrade was perceived to be least beneficial, with only 59% of respondents saying it would positively affect their business. None of the eight projects was perceived to have a negative impact on business.

Respondents were equally convinced of the positive effects for the West London and Thames Valley region as a whole. All projects were considered to have a positive impact. Only a small number of participants said that HS2, Heathrow's third runway, the Western Rail link to Heathrow and the Heathrow Southern Railway will have a negative impact on the region.

The WOW London Conference took place on 22 November in Slough. The event brought together more than 200 senior decision makers from local authorities and private sector developers, investors and housing associations, responsible for bringing growth to west London and the Thames Valley to discuss growth and economic opportunity.

Phil Wilbraham, expansion programme director at Heathrow, said: "This research illustrates the need for major infrastructure projects such as Heathrow's third runway, given the benefits they will deliver. With Heathrow expansion being entirely privately funded, our project represents fantastic value for money for Thames Valley residents and businesses, which will stand to benefit in the long-term from the investments our shareholders are making today. Since parliament's overwhelming, cross-party vote in support of this in the summer, we are getting on with delivering these benefits up and down the country."

Tim Smith, CEO of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, said: "Thames Valley Berkshire is at the centre of a fiercely competitive area that desperately needs to facilitate more and better connectivity. This is crucial to maintaining our competitive advantage. Improved access to key transport links is an essential part of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy."

Andrew Dakers, CEO of West London Business, said: "The results demonstrate the extent to which business is chomping at the bit for the Elizabeth Line to go live. It also highlights the positive impact of potential new orbital links from Brentford to Southall and the West London Orbital. There is a growing recognition in the business and investor community that these schemes could provide great return on investment and transform how we get around."

Notes for editors

The WOW London conference was organised by 3Fox International, a marketing and events company operating in the regeneration sector (www.3foxinternational.com)

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership is a business-led, multi-sector partnership mandated by government to lead activities that drive local economic growth in the Thames Valley Berkshire area (www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk)

West London Business represents businesses in North-West London, covering seven local authority areas (www.westlondon.com)



The growth day
for west London
and the
Thames Valley

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News release

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The WOW London event covers economic growth and development in the west London and Thames Valley region, bringing together public sector bodies and private sector partners to discuss collaboration to make the most of infrastructure investment. For more information, see www.wow-london.net

The main event sponsor is Heathrow Airport. Other sponsors are Ashby Capital, Kier and U+I

For further information about WOW London and other 3Fox International events, contact Natasha Pullan on natasha@3foxinternational.com