BUSINESS LDN

The West London Orbital

Consultation Response

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Date submitted: 17 November 2026

INTRODUCTION

1. BusinessLDN welcomes the opportunity to respond to Transport for London's (TfL) first public consultation on the proposed West London Orbital (WLO).

2. BusinessLDN is a business membership organisation with the mission to make London the best city in the world to do business, working with and for the whole UK. We work with the support of the capital's major businesses in key sectors such as housing, commercial property, finance, transport, infrastructure, professional services, ICT, and education.

3. The WLO would address a significant gap in London's transport network, connecting Hendon and Hounslow via existing railway corridors, including the Dudding Hill freight line. It would improve orbital journeys, connect communities to employment centres and support sustainable growth.

4. BusinessLDN strongly supports the proposals and urges the Government, the Mayor, TfL and boroughs to secure the funding and approvals needed to progress the scheme. The WLO offers an opportunity to strengthen London's economic competitiveness while supporting housing delivery and inclusive growth across west and north-west London.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Strengthening connectivity and supporting inclusive growth

5. The WLO would improve connectivity across a major economic hub where weak orbital links make it harder for people to reach jobs, employers to access talent and businesses to connect. Many journeys currently require a detour through central London, adding time and cost to everyday travel.

6. TfL estimates that the scheme could support around 25,000 homes and 11,500 jobs, generate up to £1.3 billion in wider economic benefits and remove around 650,000 car journeys annually.[1] These potential benefits underline the importance of progressing the scheme alongside housing, employment and transport planning, including through the *Draft London Plan*.

7. The WLO should be an inclusive-growth project, improving access to jobs, education and services. The English Indices of Deprivation 2025 identify significant pockets of deprivation in areas along the proposed corridor. In Brent, for example, Harlesden & Kensal Green is among

[1] TfL, West London Orbital, September 2026.

the borough's most deprived wards, with six of its 13 neighbourhoods in England's most deprived decile.[2] The WLO should help ensure that communities facing disadvantage can access the employment and other opportunities created by improved connectivity.

Unlocking development and connecting key economic hubs

8. Improved orbital connectivity could support investment across several of west London's key employment and growth areas, including Brent Cross, Old Oak and Park Royal, and the Golden Mile and Great West Corridor. By linking these clusters more effectively, the WLO could widen access to jobs and skills, strengthen established media, creative, technology, logistics and industrial businesses, and support new investment and employment growth.

9. TfL, the GLA, boroughs, the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation, the West London Alliance and private-sector partners should coordinate transport planning with housing pipelines, land ownership and local priorities. The GLA and boroughs should consider establishing a joint delivery partnership to bring together key public-sector bodies, landowners and developers, identify priority development sites and agree clear delivery commitments and milestones. This would help demonstrate to Government that development opportunities unlocked by the railway are realistic and deliverable, while identifying the planning, land assembly and infrastructure interventions needed to bring them forward. This should also balance housing growth with the protection of productive industrial land. Sustained engagement with employers and developers will be essential to translate transport investment into local economic opportunity.

10. Old Oak Common is central to the WLO's strategic business case. As a future interchange for HS2, the Elizabeth line and Great Western Main Line services, it will be a nationally significant transport hub, including while it serves as HS2's temporary London terminus before services extend to Euston. TfL should ensure convenient interchange, clear wayfinding and safe, accessible routes, integrating the WLO with wider capacity and connectivity plans.

11. The WLO could also improve connections to Heathrow Airport, a critical national asset supporting trade, inward investment and jobs across London and the UK. BusinessLDN supports proposals for a third runway and wider airport modernisation, alongside robust environmental safeguards and more sustainable surface access.[3] Connections via Old Oak Common, the Elizabeth line and the wider rail network would improve access to Heathrow without requiring a direct extension to the airport.

Delivering an integrated, accessible and reliable railway

12. We support the WLO making effective use of existing railway infrastructure, including the Dudding Hill freight line, to help deliver the scheme efficiently. The four proposed new stations either on or near newly built sections of the route – Neasden, Harlesden, Old Oak Common Lane and Lionel Road – will be critical to connecting communities and employment sites to the wider transport network.

13. As the scheme develops, TfL should ensure that these new station designs provide value for money while delivering accessible, safe and convenient journeys. This should include step-free access, safe walking routes, cycle parking, clear wayfinding and convenient interchange

[2] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, *English Indices of Deprivation 2025*, 30 October 2025.
[3] BusinessLDN, *Consultation Response to the Draft Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement*, 1 September 2026.

with rail, Underground and bus services. Consideration should also be given to over-site and adjacent development opportunities, where appropriate, to ensure the stations are effectively integrated with their surrounding areas. Harlesden's connections to the Bakerloo and Lioness lines deserve particular attention to ensure the new station integrates effectively with existing services.

14. TfL should also assess capacity, resilience, signalling, track layouts and station access against forecast demand and service frequency. This work must be undertaken with Network Rail to maintain compatibility with freight services on the Dudding Hill line.

15. We welcome TfL's intention to protect the option of a future branch to West Hampstead Thameslink and keep its inclusion under review as demand, development and funding evolve. TfL should clarify how this route will be protected through planning and design, including potential safeguarding, so that the current proposals do not unnecessarily constrain its future delivery.

16. TfL should also assess opportunities to strengthen connections with Kew Bridge and other rail services where feasible and justified by demand. The proposed Lionel Road station would provide a short walking interchange with Kew Bridge and South Western Railway services. Accessible, convenient interchanges and appropriate provision for future connections will help maximise the scheme's benefits as the surrounding area develops.

17. TfL should set out a clear, evidence-based electrification and rolling-stock strategy, comparing full overhead electrification, partial electrification with battery-electric trains, and battery trains charged at the ends of the route. The assessment should consider whole-life costs, journey times, reliability, maintenance, resilience, environmental performance, interoperability with the wider railway network and scope for future service enhancements. TfL should also explain the implications for the delivery programme and demonstrate how the preferred option will deliver reliable, sustainable services from the outset.

Funding the scheme and supporting delivery

18. Land value capture and fiscal devolution should play a greater role in funding the WLO. BusinessLDN's *Generating Land Value to Grow London* report, in partnership with WSP, modelled up to £1 billion in gross council tax and Stamp Duty Land Tax receipts over 25 years from additional housing associated with the scheme, against an estimated cost of up to £1.2 billion.[4] These are indicative estimates, not guaranteed revenues, but illustrate the potential scale of tax receipts associated with potential housing growth around the route.

19. The Government's Autumn Budget 2026 announcement on fiscal devolution and the proposed 'London Deal' offers a big opportunity to strengthen London's ability to fund major infrastructure.[5] Greater access to locally generated revenues, including business rates and income tax, could provide the Mayor with greater financial flexibility and a stronger incentive to support growth. These powers should be complemented by broader Tax Increment Financing (TIF) powers, including the ability to introduce a residential TIF to capture a share of the additional property tax revenues generated by housing growth around the WLO. Together, these measures could help London retain and reinvest more of the value generated by its

[4] BusinessLDN and WSP, *Generating Land Value to Grow London: A New Residential Funding Approach*, January 2025.
[5] HM Treasury, *The Fiscal Devolution Roadmap: Reforming the Funding Model for Regional and Local Government in England*, October 2026.

growth in vital infrastructure, reducing reliance on central government funding. This is a key part of the case set out in BusinessLDN's Autumn 2026 Budget submission[6] and recent report, *A New Deal for London 2.0*.[7]

20. The £6.65 million development funding secured by TfL and west London boroughs in March 2026 is a welcome step, but further funding is needed to complete development work and progress the WLO towards delivery. BusinessLDN looks forward to working with Government, the Mayor and TfL to translate the Budget's fiscal devolution commitments into practical funding arrangements for schemes such as the WLO, and establish a clear, funded delivery pathway with milestones.

Managing environmental impacts and disruption

21. TfL should also assess environmental and operational impacts from the outset, including noise, vibration, air quality, biodiversity, whole-life carbon, climate resilience, freight movements and access for local businesses. Attention is needed at the three level crossings that may close: Churchfield Road, Bollo Lane and Wood Lane. TfL should publish evidence on displaced traffic, journey times, bus routes and servicing and delivery access, working with boroughs and affected businesses to identify practical mitigation.

22. A credible construction strategy should set out phasing, railway possessions, construction traffic, temporary access and disruption to passenger and freight services. It should explain how land requirements, tree loss and other environmental impacts will be avoided or mitigated, and how affected businesses will be engaged through consultation. TfL should also demonstrate how consultation feedback has informed the proposals and how businesses will be kept informed as designs and construction plans develop.

CONCLUSION

23. BusinessLDN strongly supports the WLO as an opportunity to improve orbital connectivity, strengthen access to major employment centres and Heathrow Airport, and support sustainable, inclusive growth across west and north-west London.

24. We urge the Government, the Mayor, TfL and boroughs to establish a credible, funded route to delivery, supported by greater fiscal devolution and innovative funding. The scheme must also be developed in a way that protects freight operations and productive employment land, delivers reliable and accessible services, and manages environmental impacts and disruption to businesses and communities.

25. We look forward to working with TfL as the scheme progresses through design and further consultation towards a potential Transport and Works Act Order application.

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[6] BusinessLDN, *Submission to the 2026 Autumn Budget*, 22 October 2026.

[7] BusinessLDN, *A New Deal for London 2.0*, September 2026.