



**SOLENT
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Solent Local Growth Deal Consultation: Island Line (Brading Loop)

Summary of Responses

11 May 2020



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Island Line (Brading Loop)

Background

In October 2014, the Solent LEP signed the Solent Local Growth Deal with central Government. As part of this deal, the Solent LEP secured £124.8m from the Government's Local Growth Fund to support the delivery of the [Solent Strategic Economic Plan](#) through investment in projects focused on:

- Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment
- Enhancing transport connectivity across the area
- Growing the skills base and supporting business growth

A copy of the Solent Local Growth Deal is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398873/29_Solent_growth_deal.pdf

[Two further Solent Growth Deals were agreed in January 2015 and February 2017, providing further investments of £27.1m and £31.02m respectively.](#)

The LEP launched the Solent Prosperity Fund (SPF) for large capital projects in August 2018. Applicants could apply for funding of between £500,000 and £14m. Projects needed to demonstrate that they could deliver outputs to support the Solent economy, but the focus driving project assessment was deliverability, given the need to spend Local growth funding by 31st March 2021.

The fund remained open for seven rounds, with round seven closing on 29th November 2019. Over the seven rounds the fund was tailored to broaden the outputs that the LEP was looking for from projects, informed by the work the LEP was doing to develop its Solent 2050 strategy, was broadened to provide an opportunity for programme applications, and the maximum funding request was reduced to £5m. The SPF, therefore, aims to secure the following outputs:

- Enabling / unlocking housing delivery;
- SME Growth;
- Improved productivity in priority sectors;
- Connecting communities and businesses (digital and transport)
- Employment growth
- Developing skills and talent needed by employers;
- Pioneering innovation and research;
- Strengthened natural capital infrastructure;
- Waterfront employment sites
- Respond to key environmental challenges

Project Introduction

South Western Railway is applying for £700,000 of grant funding (14% of total costs) towards the reinstatement of a passing loop at Brading station in order to facilitate the operation of an even 30-minute interval train service in place of the existing staggered 20:40 minute service. This regular frequency will be easier to understand for users and better aligned with the schedule of other modes (especially ferries) making rail a more attractive and sustainable travel option for residents and visitors alike. This proposal forms part of SWR's Priced Option for the future operation of the Island Line submitted to the DfT on 31st May 2018.

The LEP funding will be complemented by £300,000 from the Isle of Wight council and £4.3m from the Department for Transport. The DfT's contribution is part of a wider programme of investment in the Island Line's railway infrastructure worth £27.8m.

This scheme is has a clear route to delivery and no need for consent. The LEP funding would enable the leveraging of a significant level of investment from DfT in the Island's rail infrastructure.

Project Objective

The proposal aims to boost usage of Island Line trains by providing a service which is easier to understand and more convenient. It will also improve connections between communities through better integration with other modes.

Analysis of the Consultation

The Consultation asked the following questions:

Question 1

Do the projects respond to the following key priority areas outlined in the Solent Strategic Economics Plan?

- Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment;
- Enhancing transport connectivity across the area; and
- Growing the skills base and supporting business growth

Question 2

Do you think the project provides sufficient geographic / sector coverage?

Question 3

Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

A total of 2 responses were received during the consultation period. Respondents are summarised as follows:

- Two Individual responses (i.e., not representing a business or organisation)

Question 1

Do the projects respond to the following key priority areas outlined in the Solent Strategic Economic Plan?

- Enabling flagship sites for housing and employment;
- Enhancing transport connectivity across the area; and
- Growing the skills base and supporting business growth

Both respondents provided commentary to this question, which can be summarised as:

- Respondents did not think the scheme responded to key priorities.

The following table provides a summary of the above points raised on the consultation against the respondent groups that these were raised by:

Points Raised	Respondent Group
A view not on the project being consulted on but a view that a fixed Link would improve connectivity to the mainland	Individual

Question 2

Do you think the project provides sufficient geographic / sector coverage?

Both respondents responded No to this question. One made an additional comments as follows:

- That a fixed link would better enhance connectivity to the mainland.

The following table provides a summary of the above points raised on the consultation against the respondent groups that these were raised by:

Points Raised	Respondent Group
Would like a fixed link considered	Individual

Question 3

Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

Both respondents provided commentary to this question. The responses are summarised as follows:

- One respondent stated that a tunnel [between the Island and the mainland] would improve connectivity to the island
- The other respondent stated that improved bus services on the island would improve connectivity across the island

The following table provides a summary of the above points raised on the consultation against the respondent groups that these were raised by:

Points Raised	Respondent Group
Connectivity to the mainland [from the Isle of Wight] would be improved by a tunnel	Individual
Improved Bus services would increase connectivity across the Island	Individual
The project does not appear to have properly considered the cost benefit of the railway upgrade vs replacement with a busway	Individual
The Island line serves a small proportion of the Island's population.	Individual