

17 November 2017

Peter Adams
Midland Metro Alliance
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B1 1TT

Dear Peter,

I am writing on behalf of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) to emphasise the importance of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension and to highlight the pivotal role which it will play in unlocking economic regeneration across Sandwell and Dudley.

BCLEP has contributed to the Development of the Business Case for Metro as well as an Economic Impact Assessment.

The Business Case is extremely positive, with a 'Benefit Cost Ratio' of 2.5:1, with anything above 1.5:1 considered good value. This means that for every £1 expended on the line, it will return £2.50.

The Economic Impact Assessment describes the potential to increase housing completions to 2,000 per annum and projects a doubling of economic output to £28bn.

While the Business case and the EIA are robust, the extension is vital to the future economic wellbeing of Dudley and Sandwell, the Black Country and indeed the wider West Midlands and ensuring that Government funding is confirmed is critical.

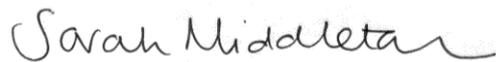
The key messages that we would wish to emphasise to Government include;

- The very positive Benefit Cost ratio of 2.5:1.
- The fact that the extension is the ONLY proposed line in the West Midlands that has all necessary Planning Consents and Transport Works Act powers in place and thus is ready to start.
- The recently declared Enterprise Zone at DY5 (Brierley Hill), projected to create 7000 jobs and 300 new business start ups during its life makes improved connectivity even more important in order to ensure the EZ is a success.
- The Metro Line opens up sites along this new transport corridor for housing and employment purposes which will assist to protect greenfield and greenbelt land from development.

- There are 4,936 businesses located within 2km of the metro extension; 395 of those are identified as strategic companies by the LEP. The Metro will improve connectivity to these businesses.
- The renaissance of Dudley Town Centre including a major mixed use development will be enhanced by the Metro and the proposed new bus interchange.
- The strong Visitor Economy offer in Dudley, with the Zoo, Castle, Canal Trust and Living Museum which have recently benefitted from a £12million award of Heritage Lottery Funding for further extension and development, will benefit greatly from the Metro route running adjacent to the attractions.
- Key regeneration initiatives along the route such as the proposed 'Very Light Rail' initiative, in partnership with Warwick Manufacturing Group and planned partnership with Dudley College to create a 'University Centre' and the proposed development of a Music Institute at Waterfront provide the opportunity to deliver NVQ level 4 and above qualifications in a range of skills for which there will be a future demand.
- Metro will be vital to ensure workers and students can reach these facilities and other employers along the route cheaply and quickly.

We are enjoying an economic renaissance that will help the West Midlands achieve its ambitions of delivering sustainable economic growth for its communities and Government funding for this Metro extension is critical to that process.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Middleton
Chief Executive
On behalf of the BCLEP