

Reimagining our Global Hub and The Future of Transportation Policy Statement

The pandemic has brought devastation to jobs and businesses in the aviation industry in the UK and abroad. Rebuilding our local economy requires new thinking and new ambition.

That is why we are coming together to address how we respond to the economic impact of the pandemic and re-imagine our global hub as a driver of new innovation and future growth.

We are backing calls for a new innovation district in West London, to bring new ways in which business and industry, research institutions and government can come together to secure larger scale opportunities for new investment, growth and jobs.

Two strategic drivers will shape the future of transport and the economy surrounding Heathrow – green growth and the impact of digital and virtual technologies - as we look to realise our path to decarbonisation and becoming a green economy powerhouse.

West London is uniquely positioned to leverage its history and tradition of transport innovation and to bring together local leaders in the community, further and higher education, research, entrepreneurship and business innovation in aviation, creative industries, tech and more widely to lead the debate about our future.

Over time, the new innovation district will become the Silicon Valley of aviation, networking people and places across the UK and internationally, nurturing new skills, new products and reshaping services. Collaborations will support innovations in materials and manufacturing, as well as hardware and software technologies, including AI, for national and global markets: driving growth through supply chains across UK regions and nations.

The district will create an environment where innovators develop and test new ideas in partnerships with major industry, investors and academia, and where these innovations will be piloted, revised and developed at-scale, in a living laboratory for the 21st century.

An innovation district based around the Heathrow ecosystem will boost the circular economy and build links with other leading airports and institutions to drive forward transformation in logistics and transportation. Aviation is much more than airports and airlines. The initiative contributes to the shared goals of the West London Alliance Build and Recovery Strategy for sustainable green growth - reskilling and upskilling the local workforce, driving diversification, transforming logistics and ensuring sustainable aviation recovery.

Our vision is about individuals, communities and our shared future.

We as signatories commit to being part of a steering network which over the next 3-6 months will drive forward the foundations of the innovation district and its long-term place in our local economy, with connections and partnerships developed with businesses and institutions across the UK and across the world.