



Hutchison Ports (UK)

Hutchison Ports (UK) Limited
(Registered in England No. 3484910)
Tomline House, The Dock, Felixstowe
Suffolk, IP11 3SY, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1394 676666
Fax: +44 (0)1394 604949
www.hph.com

Andrew Harston
Port Development Director
Tel: +44 (0)1394 604161
Fax: +44 (0)1394 604899

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02 July 2013

For the attention of Mr Richard Pill - Voluntary Officer

Bedfordshire Railway & Transport Association (BRTA)
24c St Michael's Road
Bedford MK40 2LT

Dear Mr Pill

Thank you for your letter promoting the potential benefits of a rail link between Bedford and Northampton, via Olney, which you addressed to our Chief Executive, Mr Clemence Cheng. Mr Cheng has requested that I respond to you in my capacity as Port Development Director for Hutchison Ports UK.

Hutchison Ports UK (HPUK) is fully committed to the transportation of freight by rail and at the Port of Felixstowe operates the largest intermodal freight terminal in the UK, currently handling 58 train services daily and in excess of 500,000 containers annually. The port has recently opened a new rail terminal which will provide the functionality for the freight operating companies to run longer, 30 plus wagon trains, as standard. Representing an investment of some £40m the terminal will enable the port to continue to grow the number of containers passing through the port via the rail mode.

The Felixstowe to Nuneaton rail corridor (F2N) is of primary importance to the port, linking as it does Felixstowe with both the ECML and WCML and therefore the strategically important markets of Yorkshire, the North West and the Midlands. It also negates the requirement for freight services to transit via London, which as you will be aware is heavily congested with passenger services.

Whilst therefore it is true to say that the Bedford – Northampton routing has not been a priority for HPUK to date, we are fully aware that this corridor is a key destination for the many warehousing and freight companies located in the area. Furthermore the route, if gauge cleared to W10 and therefore able to accommodate high cube containers, on standard platform rail wagons it would provide a useful diversionary path through to the WCML.

Consequently HPUK would be supportive of any such development increasing east-west rail connectivity in this geographical area.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Harston
Port Development Director HPUK



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