



Train-maker stresses need for supply chain to keep up with demands of growing workload

BY PAUL WHYATT

P: 01332 411999
E: paulwhyatt@derbytelegraph.co.uk
T: @PaulWhyattDT



BOMBARDIER says it is crucial its supply chain keeps up with the growing workload at its factory in Derby.

In recent years, the train-maker's Litchurch Lane plant has secured a number of major contracts that guarantees the future of the factory and its 2,500-strong workforce until the early 2020s.

Bombardier is also one of five shortlisted firms announced by HS2 Ltd which will be bidding for a £2.75 billion contract to provide 54 trains, which are expected to be put into service from 2026.

Speaking at a State of the Economy Conference held in Derby last week, the company's public affairs director Will Tanner said the workload had huge ramifications for its supply chain.

In a discussion panel, Mr Tanner said: "We work very closely with our supply chain to ensure they share in our success. We've got a big backlog of orders now taking us through into the next decade. It's



Important our supply chain, which is all over the UK, can cope with that.

"We're going to hold workshops through Rail Forum East Midlands to help our supply chain understand what they need to do to match what we need to do.

"It's easy for us to ramp up production at our site in Derby but

not all of the supply chain can do likewise.

"They've also got the issue of Brexit to deal with. That's a concern more for them than us partly because of the administration involved.

"As a global business, we're used to paperwork and trading across jurisdictions. If you're a smaller

supplier, you might struggle with several sets of paperwork."

The conference, organised by East Midlands Chamber, was held at the Rolls-Royce Learning and Development Centre, in Sluifin.

Panel member Jochan Schnadt, chief commercial officer at BMT Regional, said that with Brexit looming "and a complete lack of planning put forward" it was important "to do everything humanly possible to keep the status quo intact".

He dismissed scaremongers' claims that flights between the UK and the EU would be grounded after Brexit as "unrealistic".

Delegates also heard from Patrick Magee, chief commercial officer at the three-year-old British Business Bank, who described the three categories of business it was tasked to drive - new, scale-up and stay-ahead - and how it had already invested £1.19bn in businesses in the East Midlands.

Lillian Greenwood, MP for Nottingham South and chair of the Transport Select Committee, talked about the need for continued investment in transport and questioned the logic behind adopting bi-mode trains instead of faster, lighter, greener electric trains for the Midlands Main Line.

Top 10 ranking for Derby in new list of improving cities

DERBY is one of the most rapidly improving cities in the country in which to live and work, according to a report.

The 2017 Good Growth for Cities report was released by accountancy firm PwC. Now in its sixth year, the index assesses 42 of the UK's largest cities against 10 indicators. These include employment, health, income and skills - the most important factors, as judged by the public.

Housing affordability, commuting times, environmental factors and income inequality are also considered, as is the number of new business starts.

In the "Improvers" table, Derby climbed six places to 10th, having been ranked 16th last year. The biggest improver was Birmingham, followed by Leeds and then Leicester. Sunderland was bottom of the list, followed by Swansea and Middlesbrough and Stockton.

John Hawksworth, chief economist at London headquartered PwC, said: "The UK has been a great job-creating machine in recent years and this has driven improvement in our good growth index this year across all major UK cities. On average across the UK, the index is now at its highest level since it began in 2006 and all regions have benefited from this upturn."

The study also found a reduction in housing affordability, falling owner occupation rates and rising average commuter times across the 42 cities.

Queen to visit new campus worked on by city business

A DERBY stonework company stepped up to the mark when it came to the construction of a new health campus at Hull University.

Blanc de Bieres was responsible for installing grey silver granite steps at the entrance to the Allam Medical Building - part of the new £28 million health campus. The building will be opened by the Queen tomorrow.

It took Blanc de Bieres three months to complete its work, following a lengthy tendering process. Blanc had originally spoken to the architect GWP Architects four years prior to securing the contract.

Chris McBride, managing director at Blanc de Bieres, said: "We had a long period of waiting, from the start of 2016, but finally got the go ahead in March 2017. We had been keen to work on this particular project and were thrilled when we were given the go ahead.

"This was a new area for Blanc, we are renowned for supplying cast stonework to replicate natural limestone and Portland stone however we have recently added the silver grey granite products to our offering and we are delighted that they were specified for this project. It was a proud moment for us to see our hard work pay off and be part of such an iconic project."

Earlier this year, Blanc de Bieres built a large open plaza next to the British Airways 1360 tower in Brighton. The attraction offers 360-degree views across Brighton and the English Channel.