

# Transport for the North Board

**Subject:** Transpennine Route Upgrade

**Author:** James Syson, Rail Strategy Liaison Manager

**Sponsor:** David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday 29 July 2020

## **1. Purpose of the Report:**

- 1.1 The report provides a short update on the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) project as background for a presentation from the Department for Transport (the client for the scheme) at the meeting.
- 1.2 The Board is asked to note the positive progress made in addressing concerns raised by Transport for the North earlier in the year, the remaining risks and next steps.

## **2. Executive Summary:**

- 2.1 It is anticipated that an announcement will be made this month confirming government funding to be made available to Network Rail to undertake detailed design and further development work for options including full electrification along the North Transpennine rail corridor (an aspiration since 2009) as part of the TRU project.
- 2.2 The announcement looks likely to represent a major positive step forward for the project and reflect key elements of Transport for the North's statutory advice. Nevertheless, there are still some risk areas highlighted in the report that Transport for the North will need to keep under review.

## **3. Background:**

- 3.1 The TRU project is designed to deliver a high performing, reliable railway for passengers with more seats, more trains and faster journeys between Manchester and York via Huddersfield and Leeds. DfT are the client for TRU and the project has had a chequered history in terms of progress and scope – with completion originally planned for 2019. TfN has sought to shape the project using its right to provide statutory advice.

### **Challenges Raised by Transport for the North**

- 3.2 As the scheme developed in 2018 and 2019, Transport for the North had a number of concerns about the likely scope of the scheme and

the extent to which it would deliver against all the original objectives. In January 2020 Transport for the North Board endorsed issuing of a number of challenges to DfT to help shape the ongoing development of TRU, primarily:

- How the full outputs will be delivered including our aspirations for freight, de-carbonisation and accessible stations;
- The need for a coherent investment plan to unlock key performance and congestion issues that will benefit the network across the North; and
- The interfaces between three planned schemes: TRU, NPR and HS2.

### Progress Towards Meeting the Challenges

3.3 Subject to a formal announcement by DfT on the next steps, the response has been positive. In particular, it is expected that:

- Electrification of the full route is taken forward to the next stage of development;
- Options for freight capacity and gauge clearance are developed; and
- Proposals for fully accessible stations are also developed.

To this end the anticipated announcement may ultimately (subject to further DfT scrutiny and business case endorsement in Spring 2021) align the project more closely with our TRU statutory advice which has sought delivery in full of the strategic outputs for the project.

3.4 The full expected scope of the scheme is set out in Appendix 1. It is anticipated that the development would be through two parallel workstreams:

- The design and delivery of those elements of the scheme already well-advanced in their development in order to maintain momentum; and
- Parallel development of an enhanced option that would investigate electrification of the corridor in full (Manchester – York), gauge clearance and capacity options for supporting the movement of container freight traffic across the Pennines, modern digital signalling solutions, and investment at all stations to support accessibility and passenger facilities which, if supported by a positive business case, could all be added to the programme next year. This would require a further funding commitment from the DfT.

3.5 Notwithstanding the good progress that has been made, there are still some areas of risk that will need to be kept under review. These include:

- The interaction with NPR and HS2 – this interface largely being taken forward through Transport for the North’s input to the Integrated Rail Plan;
- How the scheme fits with a pipeline of investment for the North including capacity work in and around Manchester;
- The delivery programme and particularly the plan for managing passenger disruption during the construction;
- Ensuring that there are legacy benefits from TRU diversionary routes including the Calder Valley; and
- Transport for the North’s ability to bring local knowledge and input to the delivery of the scheme within the current governance arrangements (DfT is the sole client).

### Managing Passenger Disruption

- 3.6 We understand the DfT remains committed to working with industry partners to plan works so they can be undertaken with the optimum balance between disruptive access and maintaining an acceptable service for customers. The Rail North Partnership are leading on co-ordinating operator proposals for passenger handling during the delivery of the project based on work that Transport for the North and the Rail North Partnership undertook on developing a set of ‘access principles’ to shape the strategy.
- 3.7 Transport for the North through the Rail North Partnership will therefore seek to ensure mitigations for disruption are considered at each stage of the project so that the impact on customers, both freight and passenger, can be minimised wherever possible. The Rail North Committee will be used as the governance mechanism to report updates and seek input from elected members. Risk assessments for the project will continue to be undertaken by Network Rail on behalf of the DfT, who act as sole client.

### Next Steps

- 3.8 Whilst the programme for delivery is being refreshed, a start on site for some of the major interventions was possible in 2021. Timing of completion will depend on the final scope. Transport for the North will be keen to ensure any revision to the project timeline can facilitate a coherent rolling programme of investment across the North.
- 3.9 To ensure the project can maximise freight benefits and ensure the highest possible performance a number of additional complementary investment proposals are being sought through Transport for the North’s Economic Recovery Plan.

## **4. Conclusion:**

- 4.1 Pressing ahead with the delivery of TRU is a key priority for the North - it is an essential precursor to NPR. Investment along the North Transpennine rail corridor will start to provide urgently needed capacity

and reliability. It will also release capacity for future enhancements to local connectivity and freight services – something which is being captured in Transport for the North’s work on developing an Integrated Rail Plan for the North.

- 4.2 It is hoped that new governance and closer collaboration with industry, including rail operators, will inject real pace into this programme of work which is already well overdue. Transport for the North is therefore ready to support the DfT and Network Rail progress further development options and help make the case for an investment proposal more aligned to the Transport for the North’s statutory advice issued in 2018.

**5. Recommendation:**

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Board note the report and further detail provided in the appendix document as background to a presentation to be provided by DfT.

**6. Appendices:**

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Further detail on anticipated programme of work

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**List of Background Documents:**

Transport for the North Partnership Board – January 2020 Agenda Item 13  
 Subject: TransPennine Route Upgrade  
 Author: James Syson, Rail Strategy Liaison Manager  
 Sponsor: David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

Transport for the North Partnership Board - September 2019 Agenda Item 4.3  
 Subject: TransPennine Route Upgrade  
 Author: Jim Bamford, Head of Investment Planning & James Syson, Rail Strategy Liaison Manager  
 Sponsor: David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

Transport for the North Partnership Board – 20 June 2019 Agenda Item 9  
 Subject: Rail Update  
 Author: James Syson / David Hoggarth  
 Sponsor: David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

Transport for the North Partnership Board – 7 February 2019 Agenda Item 5  
 Subject: TransPennine Route Upgrade  
 Author: Jim Bamford, Head of Investment Planning & James Syson, Rail Strategy Liaison Manager.  
 Sponsor: David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

Transport for the North Partnership Board –13 September 2018 Agenda Item 4  
 Subject: TransPennine Route Upgrade  
 Author: Jim Bamford, Head of Investment Planning & James Syson, Rail Strategy Liaison Manager.  
 Sponsor: David Hoggarth, Strategic Rail Director

**Required Considerations**
**Equalities:**

Age		No
Disability		No
Gender Reassignment		No
Pregnancy and Maternity		No
Race		No
Religion or Belief		No
Sex		No
Sexual Orientation		No

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Equalities	A full impact assessment will be developed by the DfT – and we welcome the further development work to assess access	James Syson	David Hoggarth

	for all opportunities at each station along the corridor as this will support our statutory advice for Equality Act 2010 compliance at each station.		
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### Environment and Sustainability

	No
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Sustainability / Environment – including considerations regarding Active Travel and Wellbeing	A full impact assessment has not been carried out because this will be developed by the DfT as part of their business case development including an assessment of the likely benefit to air quality at stations and along the TRU corridor.	James Syson	David Hoggarth

### Legal

Yes	
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Legal	There are no new legal implications for TfN as a result of this report.	Deborah Dimock	Julie Openshaw

### Finance

Yes	
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Finance	The financial implications are being considered by the DfT as	Paul Kelly Financial Controller	Iain Craven Finance Director

	sole client for this project.		
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### Resource

Yes	
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Resource	The resource implications have been/ are being considered by the DfT as sole client for this project.	Stephen Hipwell Head of Human Resources	Dawn Madin Business Capabilities Director

### Risk

Yes	
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Risk	The key risks have been identified and can be found in this report.	Haddy Njie Risk Manager	Iain Craven Finance Director

### Consultation

Yes	
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<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Director</b>
Consultation	A consultation as part of the Transport and Works Act Order for the section of corridor between Huddersfield and Westtown has been undertaken by Network Rail but no consultation has been undertaken on the wider scheme to date. However, Transport for the North have ensured officers, elected members and LEP representatives have been fully engaged.	James Syson	David Hoggarth

## **Appendix 1 - Further detail on expected programme of work**

It is our understanding that TRU is likely to be split into around nine scheme sections (sub-projects), with a further two preparatory stages for traffic management (the optimisation and prioritisation of train movements through automating signalling decisions to improve performance and capacity) and upgrades to diversionary routes. In advance of the additional development work being concluded we understand that as the majority of expenditure for all sub-projects is required in any scenario, a decision has been taken to ensure these elements move immediately to the design phase. These include sub-projects within the geography of:

Manchester to Stalybridge:

- Remodelling for capacity & reliability;
- Electrification.

Huddersfield to Dewsbury:

- Remodelled stations;
- Four tracking and grade separation, to support reliability & capacity;
- Line speed increases;
- Electrification.

Dewsbury to Leeds:

- Asset resilience;
- Re-signalling;
- Line speed improvements;
- Electrification.

The geography of the north Trans-Pennine rail corridor that will be subject to further development work include:

Stalybridge to Huddersfield:

- Renewals work;
- Line speed increases;
- Freight and NPR options;\*
- Electrification.

East of Leeds:

- Renewals work;
- Line speed increases;
- NPR/HS2 alignment opportunities;\*



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- Electrification (Leeds to York but also investigation of short lengths of further electrification beyond the core route).

*\* Transport for the North maintains that TRU should be an essential precursor to NPR and while the Leeds to Manchester leg will add capacity to the region's rail network it will not service our regional economy in the way we know rail needs to in order for the North to deliver on productivity or economic growth. With regard to the TRU / NPR interactions that will be further considered by Network Rail as part of the further TRU development work our position remains clear – a new line, via Bradford is required to truly transform the North. Improving the existing line via Huddersfield to accommodate NPR would lead to untenable levels of disruption and would also not support our freight and local service improvement aspirations.*

Further to investigating full electrification and gauge clearance and freight capacity options, we also understand that Network Rail are being remitted by the DfT, through a Client Development Agreement, to assess the following:

- Digital signalling and train control in the core route between Cottingley (to the west of Leeds) and Stalybridge to enable improved performance, recovery from delays and potentially more capacity;
- Traffic Management on the TRU route to support further capacity and performance benefits through automated signalling decisions);
- ensuring there are lasting benefits from diversionary routes and depots and stabling works;
- Fully 'Access for All' compliant stations along the corridor and improvements to the facilities and ambiance at stations to provide an enhanced passenger experience - something we have consistently raised as a pressing concern.