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**Meeting:** Rail North Committee Consultation Call  
**Subject:** Future Infrastructure and Service Development  
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**Sponsor:** Darren Oldham, Rail and Road Director  
**Meeting Date:** Tuesday, 14 November 2023

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**1. Purpose of the Report:**

- 1.1 This report provides the Rail North Committee with a summary of how the recent announcement cancelling HS2 Phase 2 impacts existing programmes across the North of England, with a focus on how this affects the sequencing of delivery and identification of investment schemes in development and delivery critical to the development of a coherent and integrated network.
- 1.2 The report highlights some immediate activity underway by Transport for the North and the wider industry in response to the Government announcement and sets out the next steps needed to advance discussions and improve understanding. There are still a large number of outstanding questions flowing from the announcement and ongoing work by the industry to develop options. A full update with proposed actions is under development for the next meeting of the Transport for the North Board.

**2. Recommendations:**

- 2.1 That Committee notes the updates provided in relation to key rail infrastructure schemes in development and delivery across the North, and the interdependencies between them in the development of an integrated network.
- 2.2 That Committee endorses the next steps proposed in the paper and a further report to the next meeting of Transport for the North's Board.

**3. Future Services and Timetables**

- 3.1 The rail industry works to bi-annual timetable changes, currently in May and December. These often see small scale changes introduced aimed at improving train service performance, reliability and capacity.
- 3.2 More fundamental, structural changes to the timetable are made less frequently as they predominantly rely upon infrastructure and/or rolling stock interventions and will target one of these bi-annual timetable change points, but are developed far in advance as they require much more planning, and often have interdependencies across the wider network.
- 3.3 The major programmes in delivery and development across the North provide a plan for when these fundamental changes occur around which other, smaller changes can coalesce. Of note are:

**2032: Transpennine Route Upgrade**

- 3.4
- 2032 sees the completion of the Transpennine Route Upgrade, the major upgrade and electrification of the route between Manchester and Leeds facilitating faster journey times, additional passenger and freight services, and improved stations for customers.
- 3.5
- In addition to the Transpennine Route Upgrade programme, successful delivery of this timetable change is dependent upon delivery of critical

infrastructure in central Manchester, forming Configuration State 3 of the Manchester and North West Transformation Programme, and in Leeds through the Leeds Area Improvement Plan. These include platform extensions, station capacity improvement schemes and power supply upgrades supporting electrification.

- 3.6
- Network Rail is developing Concept Timetable 3 (CTT3) for 2032 to test whether the enhancements being delivered can accommodate all of the service changes which are needed to deliver the expected outcomes of the collective schemes. This is expected to report by Spring 2024 Earlier iterations of the Concept Timetable work enabled scope to be included in Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield which is now being designed or delivered.

### **2035: HS2 Phase 2A**

- 3.7
- 2035 would have seen the completion of HS2 Phase 2A, with 'classic compatible' services beginning to operate on the new HS2 infrastructure as far as Crewe, and then through to destinations in the North West and Scotland using existing infrastructure.
- 3.8
- Viewed as an 'interim' phase lasting around five years, this would likely have seen changes to local services in a compromise to fit additional long distance services using HS2 infrastructure, with central Manchester and Stockport presenting significant capacity challenges.
- 3.9
- Manchester and North West Transformation Programme Configuration State 4 targeted interventions associated with preparation for HS2 'classic compatible' services and Transpennine Route Upgrade with a particular focus on the section between Manchester Piccadilly and Stockport. The industry has identified some scope, e.g. Manchester Piccadilly Platform 0, but further validation work is required to develop solutions, with uncertainties remaining, particularly in light of the Network North announcement.

### **2040: HS2 Phase 2B**

- 3.10
- 2040 would then have seen the completion of HS2 Phase 2B Western Leg through to Manchester, with high speed services fully operational and capacity released on the local network.
- 3.11
- Recent announcements cancelling HS2 Phase 2 effectively remove the points of intervention in 2035 and 2040, introducing uncertainty around when and how the reshaped HS2 services will begin to operate to/from the North.
- 3.12
- The removal of these two intervention points associated with HS2 infrastructure creates a gap, with no significant infrastructure milestones for smaller interventions to target.
- 3.13
- A new defined intervention point for HS2 classic compatible services coming to the North is now needed in order for the industry to determine what additional interventions are required by when to ensure HS2 services can be introduced without a detrimental impact to current, local and regional services. Based on the timeline for the construction of HS2 Phase 1, this could be as soon as 2029, but is more likely to be 2033 based on revised timescales published by Government. This means theoretically that the North of England could be looking to introduce new timetables driven by both Transpennine Route Upgrade and HS2 in very quick succession. This is likely to cause issues for planning resources within operators and Network Rail.
- 3.14
- Other timetable changes of note are planned in advance of 2032, notably December 2024 with service changes proposed on the East Coast Mainline,

aligned to the East Coast Digital programme, and in 2026 following the completion of Configuration State 2 infrastructure enhancements in Central Manchester. Each of these changes is to be presented to Rail North Committee as separate reports, seeking endorsement for service changes.

#### **4. Future Infrastructure**

- 4.1 Whilst the recent government announcements around HS2 significantly changes the long-term plan for infrastructure investment in the North, the development of rail infrastructure through to 2032 remains largely unaffected.
- 4.2 Beyond 2032, there are now many unknowns, and whilst Network North provided an indication of potential schemes utilising funding released from the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2, these are subject to standard Department for Transport business case approval, and no timescales have been provided for any of the indicative schemes.
- 4.3 Transport for the North is reviewing the content of the Network North documentation published by Government, and is developing an understanding of each identified scheme and where these would best fit into the wider Rail Network Enhancement Programme, an example being electrification between Leeds and Hull, which could in theory be delivered by extending the scope and remit of either the Transpennine Route Upgrade programme or the Northern Powerhouse Rail programme.
- 4.4 The work by Transport for the North to develop a Blueprint for the North in collaboration with the rail industry will support this by helping to determine appropriate phasing of rail schemes, with identification of where additional investment will be needed to effectively integrate schemes with the existing network, targeting key nodes with known capacity constraints.
- 4.5 Transport for the North has previously raised concerns about the process for the designation of congested infrastructure, and the need for reform, and we continue to seek engagement with the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) on this matter.
- 4.6 Pending further assessment and answers to questions being raised by Transport for the North, some initial implications of the announcement on existing schemes has been identified, and is set out below:

##### **Transpennine Route Upgrade**

- 4.7 The Transpennine Route Upgrade has identified the requirement for additional platform capacity in central Manchester, informing the scope of Manchester and North West Transformation Programme Configuration State 3, which already encompasses the redevelopment of Manchester Oxford Road station and extension of platforms at Manchester Airport.
- 4.8 Additionally, platform capacity is required at Manchester Piccadilly. Platform 0 was identified as a 'no regrets' intervention to support Transpennine Route Upgrade services, however, land protections in place around Manchester Piccadilly ahead of HS2 meant that there were complexities to the scheme. Discussions have been taking place between Network Rail and HS2 Ltd to identify a way forward for the delivery of Platform 0. It should be expected that following the HS2 Phase 2 announcement, platform 0 can be progressed more easily. This point will be raised with Network Rail through the Manchester Task Force Board.

##### **Manchester and North West Transformation Programme (MNTP)**

- 4.9 Configuration State 4 for Manchester was intended to prepare the network for the integration of High Speed services, with an expectation of new HS2 infrastructure to Crewe. With this no longer being provided, Configuration State 4 will need to be revisited and should consider how the existing network can be reconfigured to

accommodate High Speed services using the conventional network as well as providing adequate capacity for local and regional services, avoiding where possible, the need for services to be compromised.

- 4.10 Network Rail has begun work on a South Manchester Strategic Advice considering the route between Stockport and Manchester Piccadilly, building on the work of their Manchester Area Strategic Statement (yet to be published) and addressing concerns raised by Transport for the North and the industry through the Manchester Task Force.
- 4.11 Transport for the North has been requested to input to the development of the South Manchester Strategic Statement, and will be requesting that as part of the work, Network Rail consider a wide range of interventions for Manchester Piccadilly, including Platform 0. Transport for the North will also request that as part of the work, an assessment is undertaken looking at the potential benefits which could be delivered through developing Platforms 15 and 16, and whether in the longer term, an underground station (as proposed for HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail) might provide the most suitable long term strategic solution to overcome capacity constraints, however the identified solutions must be informed by the need to address market gaps and respond to customer demand utilising industry data.
- 4.12 As a further example of where a revised approach is now needed, Crewe Hub has been designed to equip the station with the necessary infrastructure to support HS2 services whilst addressing long standing issues with the station which had been placed on hold in expectation of the need to remodel vast parts of the infrastructure to support the full HS2 Phase 2 programme.
- 4.13 The cancellation of HS2 Phase 2 creates uncertainty for Crewe, and for Cheshire East Council who have developed significant urban regeneration plans around the proposed service and station enhancements. Even with the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2B, significant works are still required at Crewe station to address the substantial backlog of maintenance issues including work to the roof structure and work to the platforms to address capacity challenges. It can be argued that the proposed new 'transfer deck' is still required to address accessibility and circulation issues within the station and would support and facilitate regeneration activity in the area.
- 4.14 Work will be required to assess the implications across all key nodes in NPR and Network North including Leeds and Sheffield station areas.

## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 Transport for the North has identified key next steps which will help to improve understanding, and establish what the new, long-term plan for rail infrastructure in the North should include.
- 5.2
- Continue to work with industry partners to develop the 'Blueprint for the North' incorporating schemes proposed in Network North, comparing the expected outcomes with those set out in Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan to identify where further interventions will be needed to meet the North's ambitions.
- 5.3
- Review the Revised Statutory Advice for Manchester presented to Rail North Committee and Transport for the North Board in September 2023, determining what amendments are required following the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2, and consider which other nodes on the network will require similar advice where capacity and integration issues will occur.
- 5.4
- Increase Transport for the North's engagement with schemes that interface with the existing network, e.g. Crewe Hub, to ensure a coherent solution

for the North is being developed by the industry, delivering against our strategic outcomes.

- 5.5
- Support Network Rail on the development of the South Manchester Strategic Advice, ensuring this includes consideration of Platform 0, Platforms 15 and 16 as part of the solution for Manchester Piccadilly.

## **6. Corporate Considerations**

### ***Financial Implications***

- 6.1 There are no direct resource implications to Transport for the North as result of this report.

### ***Resource Implications***

- 6.2 There are no direct resource implications to Transport for the North as result of this report. All supporting activities associated with the recommendations contain within the report will be carried-out from existing team resources.

### ***Legal Implications***

- 6.3 There are no apparent direct legal implications to consider for the purpose of this report.

### ***Risk Management and Key Issues***

- 6.4 There are a number of rail risks which are being managed at corporate level which are related to this report.

### ***Environmental Implications***

- 6.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or EIA.
- 6.6 All proposed infrastructure developments will be subject to screening for the need for EIA by the relevant development authority as part of the design development and consenting process.
- 6.7 Passenger and freight rail has an essential part to play in achieving our decarbonisation objectives within Transport for the North's Decarbonisation Strategy, particularly around managing private car vehicle mileage.

### ***Equality and Diversity***

- 6.8 A full impact assessment has not been conducted because it is not relevant to the type of work referenced.

### ***Consultations***

- 6.9 Consultations will be conducted by the appropriate body in development of the infrastructure works and on timetable changes through industry processes.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None.

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 None.

### **Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used**

a)	HS2	High Speed 2
b)	CTT3	Concept Timetable 3
c)	EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
d)	SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment