

GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**REPORT FOR INFORMATION****COMMITTEE:** Policy & Resources**DATE:** 20th November, 2009**SUBJECT:** Route Utilisation Strategies**REPORT OF:** Interim Transport Strategy Director, GMPTE**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Members of progress with the national Route Utilisation Strategies programme and the recommendations in recent published Strategies, as they relate to the Greater Manchester area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to note the contents of this report and that a report on the Electrification Route Utilisation Strategy will be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Merseyside Route Utilisation Strategy; Network Rail, March 2009.

Yorkshire & Humber Route Utilisation Strategy; Network Rail, July 2009.

Information held on file in GMPTE offices.

CONTACT OFFICER

Adam Goulcher 0161 244 1923 adam.goulcher@gmpte.gov.uk

Chris Loader 0161 244 1276 chris.loader@gmpte.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1. The Route Utilisation Strategies (RUSs) are produced by Network Rail (NetR) on behalf of the rail industry as a whole. They are intended to represent a consensus view (or at least the view of the majority of key stakeholders) of the developments required to enable the railway to meet likely future demands.
- 1.2. There are 17 geographic RUSs (of which 12 have been published – the most recent being Merseyside and Yorkshire & Humber) and a number of functional RUSs. The Freight RUS, study of Scenarios & Long Distance Forecasts and Electrification RUS have been published and work is on-going on RUSs looking at Stations and Rolling Stock & Depots.
- 1.3. Three further geographic RUSs (London & South East, Northern England and Scotland) are also being developed to address a number of cross-boundary concerns, resolve some other outstanding issues and develop outline development plans looking up to 30 years ahead.

2. Merseyside Route Utilisation Strategy

- 2.1 The Merseyside RUS, which predominantly covers the Liverpool journey to work area, was published in March 2009. The Draft for Consultation included proposals for the lines from Liverpool, Kirkby and Southport to Wigan and, therefore, at it's meeting on 6th February 2009 the then PTA resolved that comments should be submitted to NetR so as to register the interests of Greater Manchester in these routes. The response is shown in Appendix A.
- 2.2 The published Strategy recommends further development work on all the options that potentially impact on Greater Manchester and therefore the issues raised will be given further consideration. The enhanced service frequency between Wigan and Liverpool is estimated to have a Benefit:Cost Ratio of 1.6:1 and, therefore, early indications are this scheme is worth progressing.

3. Yorkshire & Humber Route Utilisation Strategy

- 3.1. The Yorkshire & Humber RUS, which includes all the cross-Pennine routes from Leeds and Sheffield, was published in July 2009. The Draft for Consultation included options for changes to all the cross-Pennine routes and, therefore, was of significant interest to Greater Manchester. Consequently, at it's meeting on 11th November 2008, the then Policy Committee resolved that comments should be submitted to NetR so as to register the interests of Greater Manchester in these routes. The response is shown in Appendix B.

- 3.2. The published Strategy contains a number of recommendations of interest to Greater Manchester. These correspond well with the representations made in all but one respect – on the Huddersfield line the recommendation is that additional Manchester – Leeds fast trains should be operated in preference to additional Stalybridge – Huddersfield local trains. The recommendations are summarised in Appendix C, along with the consultation options, representations made by the then PTA and some further comments on the way forward.

4. Northern Route Utilisation Strategy

- 4.1. Although the North West RUS made a number of recommendations looking 10 years ahead (reported to Policy Committee on 13th July, 2007) there were some areas where it was not possible to reach a conclusion because there were too many unknowns. In particular, the consequences of the West Coast Route Modernisation Project (especially the impacts on local services) were unknown, as were the outcomes of planning applications for new freight terminals.
- 4.2. In addition, since 2007, the East Coast Main Line, Lancashire & Cumbria, Merseyside, Yorkshire & Humber, Freight and Electrification RUSs have been published and the Network Rail Case for New Lines report has been issued. (The Electrification RUS was published at the end of October and a report will be presented to the next meeting of this Committee). Also, work has commenced on developing the Strategic Freight Network, the government has announced electrification of the line between Manchester and Liverpool via Newton-le-Willows, the Manchester Hub and High Speed 2 studies are all progressing towards their conclusions and the Intercity Express project, which is developing the next generation of long-distance trains, is nearing completion.
- 4.3. Given these factors, the rail industry has concluded that it is appropriate to review the North West RUS in the light of all these developments (and on-going work on East Midlands and West Coast Main Line RUSs) and produce a comprehensive document, fully compatible with the Developing a Sustainable Transport System requirements, recommending priorities for investment throughout the north of England during the next railway financial control period (Control Period 5, 2014-2019), within the context of an outline development plan looking 30 years ahead, as has been the practice with more recent Strategies. The Northern RUS is due to be completed in spring 2011.
- 4.4. The Northern RUS will not repeat past work, except where there have been significant developments, but will update conclusions in the light of revised demand forecasts. For this purpose it is intended to use the outputs from the joint Department for Transport / PTEs / Northern Rail demand forecasting study that is currently on-going.

- 4.5. NetR proposes to publish an initial paper, incorporating outputs from the Northern RUS work, in June 2010 outlining Options for investment during Control Period 5 (2014-2019). This will enable discussion before they publish their Initial Strategic Business Plan (ISBP) for the Control Period in June 2011 and the Department for Transport (DfT) publish their High Level Output Specification (HLOS) and Statement of Funds Available in July 2012. It is intended that the Northern RUS work will influence the options paper, ISBP and HLOS.
- 4.6. The Office of Rail Regulation has recently published an outline timeline for the development of the Control Period 5 plans confirming the requirements for consultation on the Options and at other stages of the process.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The RUS programme is now entering an important stage as recommendations from these Strategies and other studies (e.g. Manchester Hub, High Speed Rail) are prioritised for inclusion in the NetR ISBP and DfT HLOS. It will continue to be important for the ITA and PTE to engage with the rail industry to ensure the interests of Greater Manchester are properly represented in the emerging investment programmes so that the economic and social well-being of the conurbation continue to improve.

6. Recommendations

See front sheet of report for recommendations.

Adam Goulcher
Interim Transport Strategy Director

**Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority and
Passenger Transport Executive**

**Comments on the Merseyside Route Utilisation Strategy: Draft for
Consultation**

Introduction

The Merseyside Route Utilisation Strategy shows careful analysis of available data and consideration of the needs of the Liverpool area. The three options that impact on Greater Manchester appear reasonable in principle, although there are some significant factors that require further consideration. The outcome of this further work will determine the appropriateness of the Kirkby and Southport options for Greater Manchester.

The PTE therefore looks forward to working with the wider rail industry to further develop any recommended options that impact on Greater Manchester so that together we can deliver a heavy rail network that can continue to contribute to the growth of the north west economy.

Liverpool – Wigan / Preston

The North West RUS concluded that frequencies between Liverpool and Preston should be increased, but the method should be referred to other RUS. It is noted that this subsequent work has resulted in two options presented in the draft Merseyside RUS:

- That travel between Liverpool and Preston via Ormskirk should become possible every hour off-peak (therefore, with the hourly service via Wigan, to effectively provide 2 trains per hour between Liverpool and Preston), and
- The introduction of a second fast train per hour between Liverpool and Wigan (to provide 4 trains per hour between Liverpool and Wigan – 2x fast and 2x stopping. The Preston - Wigan service remaining 3 trains per hour).

These options appear to benefit Wigan with no adverse effects elsewhere in Greater Manchester and therefore are supported.

Kirkby – Wigan

The North West RUS made no recommendations for this service; however it is noted that the draft Merseyside RUS has two options:

- In the short term (up to 2014) extend electrification beyond Kirkby for approximately 1km to a new station at Headbolt Lane, and
- In the medium term (2014-2019) give consideration to construction of a new line into Skelmersdale and provision of a Liverpool – Skelmersdale electric service.

Both of these options require further appraisal; however the proposals appear reasonable in principle.

The Wigan – Kirkby branch is little used and most passenger journeys are internal to the line; however more clarity is required on the future operation of the service at the Wigan end of the line, including the possibility of a Wigan – Skelmersdale service. Therefore we would welcome the opportunity for further discussions on this proposal as it is developed further.

Ormskirk – Southport

The North West RUS made no recommendations for the Wigan – Southport service, other than the need for additional passenger capacity. The draft Merseyside RUS, however, presets the option of extending electrification beyond Ormskirk to Southport via Burscough in the medium term (2014-2019); subject to a satisfactory business case.

Although this appears a reasonable option it needs to be considered in the context of possible electrification of Greater Manchester services. Following any electrification of the Manchester – Preston – Blackpool line the electrification of Lostock – Wigan – Southport could have a good Conversion Ratio (vehicle miles electrified / track miles electrified) and therefore may show a good business case.

The Merseyrail Electrics and Manchester electric services, however, use different systems which are not necessarily compatible. Consequently the issues at the Greater Manchester / Merseyside interface, as the two electrical systems come together, need to be resolved before extensions of the Liverpool electric network of this nature are progressed. One solution may be the use of trains that can operate on both electrical systems. The points of change between systems, however, will need to be carefully selected so as to minimise the costs of adapting the infrastructure, while achieving efficient use of rolling stock and enabling trains to operate services more closely aligned to the journeys people wish to make. In consideration of the complexity of the issues this option raises we would welcome the opportunity for further discussion as it is developed further.

Appendix B

**Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority and
Passenger Transport Executive**

**Comments on the Yorkshire & Humber Route Utilisation Strategy: Draft for
Consultation**

Introduction

The Authority welcomes the publication of the consultation draft of the Yorkshire and Humber Route Utilisation Strategy and the constructive dialogue it has had with Network Rail during the process. The main interest of the Authority concerns the Trans-Pennine routes and related issues which were left partially complete in the North West RUS. These issues related to how best to provide capacity and improved journey times into and out of Manchester on those services that cross into Yorkshire and the development of inter-regional connectivity for passenger services.

The three corridors of interest to the Authority are the Calder Valley, Hope Valley and Huddersfield lines. This response addresses each corridor in turn.

Calder Valley Corridor

The Authority has an aspiration to see faster trains on this corridor, and to see that those trains serving commuters towards Manchester have increased capacity in the peak periods. The Authority believes there is a need for increased local service capacity between Manchester and Todmorden. GM Transportation Unit and TOC train counts indicate a load factor of 86% during the three-hour peak, with a demand from 1,900 passengers and capacity (defined to include an allowance for standees) of 2,200.

The RUS acknowledges our concerns of the excessive journey time between West Yorkshire and Manchester via the Calder Valley when compared to the Huddersfield line - this impacts on the extent of the Greater Manchester labour market, and the costs of doing business across this part of the Pennines. Therefore to this end the Authority welcomes option CV3, and in particular the intention to provide for six peak hour Rochdale-Manchester three-car stopping services, which would add capacity to meet the shorter-distance demand we are expecting, and allow for faster longer-distance services. The Authority therefore also welcomes the proposal for an additional hourly all-day Todmorden-Manchester service.

The Authority supports the development of the case for a direct service from Burnley through the promotion of the Todmorden Curve, though this is an issue which seems to fall between the North West, East Lancashire and Yorkshire & Humber RUSs'.

The Authority feels that more emphasis should be given in the final RUS to the potential for journey time improvements (perhaps through improvements in the underlying line-speed). However it is important to the authority that any

reductions in the journey times of longer distance trains is not at the expense of service frequencies from, Littleborough, Smithy Bridge, Castleton and Mills Hill to Manchester Victoria.

Hope Valley Corridor

The Authority has an aspiration to see an increase in both the capacity and speed of trains on this corridor because of the impacts this route has on the extent of the Greater Manchester labour market, and on the costs of doing business between the North West and South Yorkshire. The Authority welcomes the options to improve both peak and off-peak capacity through the introduction of an additional hourly train between Manchester and New Mills Central via Marple both during the peak and off-peak. We feel that this potential outcome was not sufficiently clearly expressed in the draft RUS.

The Authority is concerned that there are no proposals on this line to increase line speeds. Journey times between Manchester and Sheffield via Stockport are excessive for the distance involved (average journey time is 52 minutes and average speed is only 44mph). Furthermore the market between the two cities has the potential to be much larger for rail given the lack of either a motorway or even a dual carriageway 'A' road between these centres – and we feel the rail industry must seek to exploit this. The lack of fast rail services will have a negative impact on the economic growth of these two city-regions but it does not appear that this issue has even been considered, let alone options for its mitigation generated. The Authority strongly suggests therefore that in the final RUS Network Rail consider whether they can identify the maximum costs that might be justifiable for each minute of journey time savings on this route, so that future development of options to reduce journey times can be taken forwards.

Huddersfield Corridor

The draft correctly recognises the importance of this corridor and the increased levels of patronage that have been experienced recently. This route has similar characteristics in terms of its economic impact as the other Trans-Pennine routes in that it impacts both on the extent of the Greater Manchester labour market, and on the costs of doing business between the North West and West Yorkshire. The North West RUS provided a strategy for alleviating overcrowding on Northern Rail services but a more comprehensive strategy for the issue was required.

The Authority is concerned that the RUS has not examined options to increase the off – peak and peak frequency of local trains serving stations between Huddersfield and Stalybridge en route to Manchester Victoria. The off-peak issue was identified as missing from the North West RUS and we had expected it to be addressed here.

It is important to the Authority that additional capacity is provided on TPE services and a hourly stop at Stalybridge on the Manchester Airport service. However, it is vitally important also that this does not jeopardise valuable, very well used and fast growing local services which justify both increased

frequencies and strengthening. Option HD2, to provide an additional three-car Trans-Pennine Express all-day between Manchester to Leeds is thus only supported if options can also be set out that might allow the future increase in frequency and strengthening of the off-peak and peak local services. Given the current limitation of six train paths per hour between Huddersfield and Stalybridge, four fast TPE trains are the most that are justifiable. The Authority understands the limitations of running lengthened TPE trains (including issues relating to splitting/joining strategy, mitigating the running of poorly loaded carriages, and platform lengths), but they have previously been operated on this route. We ask that the final version of the RUS sets out the potential to run an additional off-peak local stopping service (perhaps in the first instance in the shoulder of the peak) and a third morning peak hour train between Huddersfield, or at least Greenfield, and Manchester Victoria (there are already three evening peak hour trains from Manchester Victoria). Given the very low freight usage on the route we feel it is appropriate to examine the extent to which a local service, could make use of unused daytime freight paths. In the longer term it would be helpful to explore in the document what the benefits might be of infrastructure that would enable local services to be turned around at points more commensurate with the build-up of demand (e.g. through the re-instatement of loops at Diggle).

The North West RUS in option 2 for the Chat Moss Corridor (see pg 98 in N W RUS) set out the option of a fourth hourly fast train between Liverpool and Manchester. The routeing of this train through Manchester was to be covered by the YH RUS however we are unable to find any reference to this. We are concerned by this omission and that noted in para 2.6 above, and believe that there is a need to set out how a more holistic view of the services between Leeds and Manchester/Liverpool will be generated.

The Authority also has an aspiration for improved journey times and we note that the 2007 Rail White Paper contained within it a firm statement from the DfT regarding delivery of a 43-minute journey time between Manchester to Leeds. Furthermore the recent DfT document "Developing a Sustainable Transport Strategy" (DaSTS) has reiterated the importance of journey time reductions on the Trans-Pennine corridor and sets that between 2009 and 2014 journey times between Leeds and Liverpool will be cut by around 20 minutes. At the moment the Leeds-Manchester service averages a speed of 41 mph and takes around 55 minutes. The addition of extra three-car Trans-Pennine Express services between Manchester to Leeds may contribute to this aspiration but the extent of this contribution has not been quantified and this measure in itself is unlikely to be adequate. We feel the RUS should set out clearly the programme and timetable for achieving journey time reductions on the Trans-Pennine routes. In particular it should set out how it will deliver Government's plans for a 43 minute Manchester-Leeds journey, and the 20 minutes reduction in the Liverpool-Leeds (before 2014) within the timeframes set out in the 2007 rail White Paper and the 2008 DaSTS document.

Summary

In summary, on the Calder Valley Line, our principal interest is in improved line speeds, and believe that this issue should be given more emphasis in the final version of the RUS. Of those options identified in the draft, we are supportive of proposals to provide six peak-hour three-car stopping services between Manchester and Rochdale, and for an additional hourly all day Todmorden to Manchester service.

On the Calder Valley Line we would like to see the option to improve peak and off-peak capacity through the introduction of an additional hourly service between Manchester and New Mills Central via Marple further developed, and feel that that this option is not clearly expressed in the current version. We would also like Network Rail to look at the potential for journey time savings between Manchester and Sheffield through the identification of maximum costs that might be justifiable for each minute of journey time savings.

On the Huddersfield Line the Authority asks that you look at options to increase the off-peak and peak frequency of local trains serving stations between Huddersfield and Stalybridge en route to Victoria. The Authority also can only support option HD2, to provide an additional all-day TPE service between Manchester and Leeds, if options are set out that allow for future increases in frequency and strengthening of the off-peak and peak stopping services. The final version of the RUS should set out the potential to run an additional off-peak stopping service, and a third morning peak hour train between Huddersfield, or at least Greenfield, and Victoria.

We also ask that you look generally at how options for services between Leeds and Manchester/Liverpool will be generated, as this was promised in the North West RUS and has not been included here. We also ask that the final version of the RUS should set out the programme and timetable for the achievement of improved journey times on the trans-pennine route such that the 43 minute journey time between Manchester and Sheffield, set out in the rail white paper, will be attained.

**Options in Yorkshire & Humber Route Utilisation Strategy Draft for
Consultation that impact on Greater Manchester**

Huddersfield Line (Manchester – Leeds via Stalybridge and Huddersfield)			
Consultation Options	Response	Strategy Recommendation	Comments
<p>Option HD2 To reduce peak and off-peak crowding. Manchester – Leeds additional all day hourly semi-fast service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional hourly 3-car service in both directions all day, • Enhanced freight loops at Marsden and at Diggle. <p>Option HD3 To reduce peak crowding. Manchester – Leeds semi-fast train lengthening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 additional vehicles spread across approximately 6 peak journeys, • Platform lengthening. <p>Option HD4 Remove restrictive loading gauge for freight trains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration for comprehensive strategy to increase capacity of local and long distance services. North West RUS considers local services; Y&H RUS considers long-distance services. • Recognise importance of increased capacity on long-distance services, but can only support additional long-distance trains after consideration given to half-hourly local service. • Concern that neither RUS considers increasing frequency of off-peak local services between Stalybridge and Huddersfield, despite growth in passenger numbers from local stations in recent years. • Consideration should be given to operating additional local journeys to points commensurate with the build-up of demand. • Comprehensive review of Liverpool - Manchester – Leeds services required (as recommended by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional all day hourly semi-fast service Manchester – Leeds (possibly on to Selby). With lengthening of existing fast trains total of 15 additional carriages in use between Manchester and Leeds in the peaks. • Freight loops at Marsden and at Diggle to be enhanced. • Removal of restrictive loading gauge for freight trains to be addressed through Northern Gauging Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional all day hourly semi-fast service restricts ability to increase frequency of local trains. • Network Rail is developing a proposal for improvements in the Stalybridge area to enable operating additional local journeys commensurate with the build-up of demand. • Comprehensive review of Liverpool - Manchester – Leeds, Manchester Airport and local services progressing within the Manchester Hub study.

	<p>NW RUS), including assessment of how journey times can be reduced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-fast services (stopping at Stalybridge, Huddersfield and Dewsbury) should provide link to Manchester Airport, not fast services (stopping only at Huddersfield). 		
Calder Valley Line (Manchester - Leeds via Rochdale and Bradford)			
Consultation Options	Response	Strategy Recommendation	Comments
<p>Option CV3 To reduce peak crowding and improve regional links. West Yorkshire – Manchester Victoria improved journey times and additional services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leeds – Victoria (via Bradford) trains run fast between Todmorden and Manchester all day calling only at Rochdale, • Additional half-hourly 3-car service between Rochdale and Manchester in both peaks, • Additional hourly all-day service between Todmorden (or beyond) and Manchester to cover stops removed from faster Leeds service, • Potential new infrastructure at Todmorden or Hebden Bridge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration for faster trains and increased capacity. • Welcomes additional trains between Todmorden / Rochdale and Manchester. • Would like to see development of proposals for Todmorden services to be extended to Burnley. • Although seeking faster journey times between main centres this should not be at expense of service frequencies at local stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional half-hourly 3-car service between Rochdale and Manchester in both peaks. • Line speed enhancements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Additional half-hourly 3-car service between Rochdale and Manchester being considered within deployment plans for additional carriages to be provided through High Level Output Specification process. • Revision to timetable in December 2008 delivered some improvements to journey times. Further improvements being considered within Manchester Hub study.

Hope Valley Line (Manchester – Sheffield via Stockport or Marple)			
Consultation Options	Response	Strategy Recommendation	Comments
<p>Option HV1 To reduce peak crowding and improve regional links. Additional peak Manchester – Sheffield services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one additional hourly 2-car service via New Mills, • Double tracking through Dore station. <p>Option HV2 To reduce peak crowding. Manchester – Sheffield peak train lengthening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 4 additional vehicles spread across 4 journeys. • Platform lengthening. <p>Option HV3 To improve Regional links and freight capability. Additional inter-peak Manchester – Sheffield services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional hourly 2-car service via New Mills, • Additional freight loops in Hope / Grindleford area, • Double tracking through Dore station. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration for faster trains and increased capacity. • Welcome additional services via New Mills – should operate all day. • Concerned no options to reduce journey times – request further work on this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hourly 3-car service all day via Marple, subject to ability to timetable additional journeys without an adverse impact on express and freight trains. • Double tracking through Dore station. • Additional freight loops in Hope / Grindleford area, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of options to increase frequencies of local and express trains and reduce journey times being progressed through Manchester Hub study.