

TRANSPORT FOR GREATER MANCHESTER COMMITTEE**REPORT FOR RESOLUTION****DATE:** 28th April 2011**SUBJECT:** Northern Hub Update: Ordsall Chord
Announcement**REPORT OF:** Rail Programme Director, Transport for Greater
Manchester**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide Members with an update on the implications of the recent Ordsall Chord announcement on rail services in and around Greater Manchester, and on the wider progress of the Northern Hub programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to

1. Note the report and ask officers to determine the timescales for more discussion around the options for the December 2016 timetable.
2. Continue to make the case for the realisation of the full benefits of the Northern Hub programme, and the implementation of related physical works, within the context of the DfT's 2012 High Level Output Specification.
3. Continue to work with those stakeholders both within, and neighbouring Greater Manchester, who have most to gain from the proposed hub benefits.
4. Ask officers to circulate a short information paper and map for more general use by Members on the Ordsall Chord proposals.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Manchester Hub Rail Study, Network Rail, February 2010

Manchester Hub Conditional Output Statement, Northern Way, April 2009

Northern Hub reports to GMITA Policy and Resources, Sep 2010, Mar 2010

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1. Background

- 1.1. Congestion on the rail infrastructure around Manchester has been recognised as a problem for a significant period of time. The number of passengers travelling on both the north–south and east–west services to and through Manchester has increased; resulting in more trains and increased levels of overcrowding.
- 1.2. The conclusion of Network Rail’s first study into these issues in February 2010 included a proposed package of improvements. These included new infrastructure totalling around £ 530m yielding economic benefits of around £ 4bn to the North of England.
- 1.3. Since March 2010 Network Rail has continued to develop the proposals, in conjunction with other industry parties, TfGM and PTEs, to the next stage of development (GRIP 2 – the stage at which a number of engineering options are identified and developed at each site). After this work is completed, it is likely that Network Rail will include the plans in the Autumn 2011 Initial Industry Business Plan – the first stage of the process of agreeing with government whether or not the works will be funded in the period 2014-2019.
- 1.4. There are few other schemes in the UK which are both of similar magnitude and level of development as the Northern Hub. The robust economic evidence base behind the Hub schemes, coupled with the strong support from stakeholders across the north, are essential to it remaining a strong contender for government funding from 2014 onwards. Continued efforts from TfGM in building the evidence base and maintaining support are critical.
- 1.5. It should be noted that Network Rail’s work on the hub is at a strategic level in that they are developing solutions to forecast growth in passenger numbers and the many infrastructure bottlenecks that exist in the rail network. The exact details of the train timetables at many individual stations will not be worked out for several years.
- 1.6. The Hub scheme proposed by Network Rail is comprised of around two dozen interventions which, when taken together, would allow an increase in capacity across the rail network, reduced journey times, an increase in the number of destinations reachable without the need to change trains, and improvements in punctuality. It also provides significant extra capacity for freight

trains – particularly into Trafford Park and Port Salford. The infrastructure proposals include a new chord at Ordsall Lane, two additional through platforms at Piccadilly, extra tracks between Stalybridge and Huddersfield (through the Standedge tunnels), and other works across the North of England.

2. The Ordsall Lane Chord

- 2.1. On 23 March the Chancellor announced funding of £85m for implementation of one part of the Northern Hub programme. This unexpected announcement precedes the key decisions Government is expected to make on the whole of the hub programme in publishing its High Level Outputs Specification for the railway for the period 2014-19 in July 2012. Coupled with the North West electrification programmes, this development will be one of the most significant changes to Manchester's rail network for a generation.
- 2.2. The plans announced by the Chancellor indicate that Government expects Network Rail to deliver the Ordsall Lane chord before December 2016, subject only to Network Rail acquiring the necessary planning consents.
- 2.3. The Ordsall Lane chord will enable trains to travel from Victoria and points east, via Oxford Road, to Piccadilly and points south. It will require a new bridge from the railway south of Salford Central station over Trinity Way ("the inner ring road") and the River Irwell, to the railway west of Deansgate station. Some related works are likely to be carried out to the railway between Stalybridge and Salford Central to improve journey times and enable more trains to be operated.
- 2.4. By December 2016 Network Rail will have completed the electrification of all of the elements of the Lancashire Triangle (via Wigan, Eccles and Bolton to Manchester), new electric trains will be operating the Airport-Scotland route, and cascaded electric trains will have been provided for Northern's local services enabling diesel trains to be redeployed. Work to journey times speeds on the routes from Manchester to Liverpool and Leeds will also have been completed.
- 2.5. More widely by 2016 the redevelopment of the passenger facilities and environment of Manchester Victoria should be complete – and much of the planned Metrolink expansion,

including the second city crossing, will either be complete or nearing completion.

3. Development of service patterns

- 3.1. Unlike bus timetables railway timetables are difficult to change – in part because of the complexity of interactions across the network - almost all of the trains that runs each day (around 20 000 across Great Britain) is planned to have a green light at every signal and junction. December 2016 will become a very significant milestone in the evolution of the railway timetable across the North of England. Naturally many of these changes will affect trains across Greater Manchester.
- 3.2. The new timetables that will take advantage of both the electrification, and the implementation of the Ordsall Chord in December 2016, will require significant changes. The process for developing these new timetables will be incorporated into work that Network Rail is leading over the next few months, and into the work leading to the specification of the new North of England franchise(s). TfGM officers are playing a central role in this process – and our evidence and analysis (as reported to GMITA in September) is being used by Network Rail in their decision-making. The criteria that are being used in prioritising service development options include the following:
 - Net financial impact on DfT;
 - Net economic benefits both to the UK and to the North;
 - Maximising utilisation of newly electrified routes by electric trains – thus maximising the long-term carbon impact of the electrification;
 - Maximisation of use of scarce capacity on intensively used corridors;
 - Improving the capacity and quality of local commuter services into Greater Manchester;
 - Matching service patterns/frequencies with projected future passenger demand, including consideration of new housing and developing employment locations;
 - Impact on improving connectivity (a) across Greater Manchester, (b) more widely within the North; and
 - Opportunities are seized wherever possible improving connectivity to the spread of end-destinations in central Manchester and Salford.

- 3.3. Leeds-Manchester-Airport and Leeds-Manchester-Liverpool services will be moved from the Piccadilly route to the route via Victoria. The Airport trains will use the new chord. The diversion of express services through Victoria, and related works to linespeed, will reduce journey times. Trains from Manchester to Liverpool will take around 33 minutes (compared to an average of 45 minutes today), and trains from Manchester to Leeds will take around 44 minutes (from around 55 minutes today). These reductions in journey time are very significant and lead to a large proportion of the projected financial and economic benefits. The possibility of electrifying from Manchester to Leeds will be considered as part of wider planning for an electrified railway; this would give further benefits to both local and express services on that route.
- 3.4. Network Rail will need to plan other services to facilitate this outcome. This will lead to some changes to other services. For example the loss of TransPennine trains on the corridor from Piccadilly through Warrington Central will lead to the need for another fast service to be provided from Piccadilly to Warrington Central and Liverpool. One or two services that currently use Piccadilly may need to be re-routed to Victoria (until subsequent commitments are made to develop more through platforms at Piccadilly). There are spin-offs derived from the extra capacity at Piccadilly that may give us the opportunity to improve local services in Greater Manchester - particularly from the south east side of Greater Manchester and beyond. For example it may provide an opportunity to develop a more regular and consistent service pattern on the trains serving Gorton, Glossop, Hadfield, Hyde, Romiley and Marple and New Mills.

4. Progressing the Northern Hub programme

- 4.1. The Ordsall Chord is only one of the infrastructure components that make up the £ 530m Northern Hub programme. The work to develop the remainder of the Hub will continue. A key part of this is the creation of additional through platforms at Piccadilly that will enable full use to be made of the new chord. Other key components include new infrastructure on the corridors to West Yorkshire (e.g. at Dewsbury), Merseyside (e.g. at Huyton) and South Yorkshire (e.g. at Dore). The completed Hub programme will, for example, provide better connectivity between South Yorkshire/East Midlands, Manchester and Merseyside; more rail-borne freight into Greater Manchester through Trafford Park (one of the biggest industrial parks in Europe), and new connectivity from the Calder Valley and Bradford to Manchester Airport. The

use of the new infrastructure at Ordsall Chord will be limited to a handful of trains each hour until additional through platforms are developed at Piccadilly.

- 4.2. There is also a need to consider new platforms at Salford Central – these are not currently within the scope of Network Rail’s plans – although Salford City Council has appraised the benefits of such platforms, and is working with both Network Rail and TfGM officers on these plans. The additional platforms would have a strong synergy with developer and Salford-led planning, as well as with the cross city bus proposals.
- 4.3. Naturally we must continue to press for development of the Hub programme so that the substantial and widespread economic benefits of the programme to the Northern economy are realised as quickly as possible. The benefits of the Hub programme, as set out above, cannot be delivered until these further commitments are made. Network Rail’s plans for the Hub have envisaged full realisation of all benefits by 2019. Government decisions that would underpin that timescale will be made as part of the July 2012 DfT High Level Outputs Specification for the period 2014-19.
- 4.4. It is also important to recognise that the development of the Hub plans is a pre-requisite to implementation of High Speed Rail services to Manchester from 2026. HS2s working assumptions, published in March 2010, include the completed hub infrastructure. Without the better connectivity the hub will provide the full benefits of High Speed Rail to the North West are unlikely to be realised.
- 4.5. Network Rail has firmly prioritised the Hub in their own plans for the railway network. The combination of their determination – and the firm and consistent support from across the north has led to this early milestone of the Ordsall Chord implementation being reached. It is vital that the support for the hub is maintained throughout the next 12-24 months.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. Please see front page for recommendations.

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