

# Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy



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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### COMMISSION

- 0.1. SLC Rail was commissioned in May 2015 by Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership to prepare a rail strategy for Leicester and Leicestershire. The context is that:
- Leicester and Leicestershire are targeting significant economic and housing growth
  - The rail industry is at a pivotal moment in planning the services that are needed over the next 30 years, the infrastructure required to support them
  - Planning for the second phase of HS2, through North West Leicestershire, Toton and to the north is now advancing.
- 0.2. The value of rail in support of economic development is now widely acknowledged, because rail usage has doubled over the 20 years since 1994. New services have been provided to accommodate this growth, and the rail network is largely full because of this. Planning for new services has a long gestation, and the infrastructure required for them is expensive. Choices must be made as to what can be afforded and in what order, and the key for Leicester and Leicestershire is a clear set of priorities with which to lobby and generate a commonality of interest between stakeholders.

#### CONTEXT

- 0.3. The context is that Leicester and Leicestershire have relatively poor rail connectivity. Whilst the service to London is frequent from Leicester, the strategic connectivity to regional and national centres of economic activity is weak. Fast and frequent regional and national rail links are becoming increasingly important for business to business connectivity, as well as for travel to work and leisure journeys. The importance of business to business connectivity has been demonstrated comprehensively in work undertaken by Network Rail (Market Studies 2013) and by HS2 Limited (“Rebalancing Britain” – October 2014). The shortening of journey times and direct services between key cities and towns is vital to support economic growth.

#### PRIORITIES

- 0.4. The priorities for Leicester and Leicestershire are:
- To maximise the benefit from the Midland Main Line services.** Maximising the benefits means:
    - Pressing for completion of electrification with the minimum of further delay
    - Ensuring that MML continues to be served by high quality, modern passenger rolling stock in the period prior to electrification, including the use of bi-mode trains
    - Using the opportunity from the later implementation of electrification to put in at the same time the capacity needed for Leicester and Leicestershire’s long term growth as a part of the project. (This includes work identified already by Network Rail to support rail services in the longer term, including 4-tracking between Syston and Wigston,

additional platforms at Leicester, and grade separation of North-South and East-West traffic flows through the Leicester area.)

- Securing the journey time improvements to achieve a sub-60 minute journey time between Leicester and London on non-stop services, including the straightening of the tracks through Market Harborough Station (We would also wish to see the prompt completion of the works to lengthen the platforms and to improve to the station's accessibility.)
- Ensuring that rolling stock on the Midland Mainline is replaced by new intercity standard rolling stock of appropriate quality and performance, particularly for the electric services, including the use of bi-mode trains. Ensuring that there is a physical link between HS2 and the Midland Mainline in the area of the new East Midlands Hub station to enable classic compatible trains to connect Leicester and Leicestershire with the North.
- Ensuring there is capacity for strategic freight services in support of the region's logistics industry.
- Ensuring that new intercity rolling stock of appropriate quality and performance is procured for the electric services.

ii. **To achieve the best result from the implementation of HS2 Phase 2.** The proposed route will run through the north-western part of Leicestershire, with the nearest stations being Birmingham Interchange (near the NEC) and East Midlands Interchange at Toton. The delivery of this project will result in fast services from Sheffield and the Nottingham/Derby area to London and the North. Achieving the best result means:

- Ensuring that the perceived risk of lengthening journey times between Leicestershire stations and London does not occur. The risk arises because existing Midland Main Line trains are projected to lose nearly half of their passengers to HS2. However, forecast growth in passengers will mean that existing levels of demand will be exceeded even with HS2. Nevertheless, Leicester and Leicestershire should seek assurances from the Secretary of State that Leicester's fast services will be protected.
- Securing through "classic compatible" direct services from Leicester to destinations in the north via HS2. The journey time reductions available are substantial (up to an hour on many station pairings). It is recognised that Leicester and Leicestershire in themselves may not justify a strong business case for these services, but if services are provided through Leicester from key economic development areas in the South Midlands and Thames Valley, the proposition is substantially strengthened, especially if an alliance with other LEPs and Local Authorities can be achieved, including with Transport for the North, creating a "string of pearls".

iii. **To improve radically direct fast connectivity to key regional and national destinations.**

As noted, Leicester and Leicestershire have poor rail connectivity. A model has been used to test the potential GVA uplift that could be achieved through new and enhanced services. This was used to identify priorities for development. Using this prioritisation, radically improving connectivity means:



- Faster journeys to London and Birmingham
- New direct services to Coventry (which would help to deliver more frequent services to South Wigston, Narborough and Hinckley), the Thames Valley, Manchester and West Yorkshire
- Reduced east-west journey times ) and increase in frequency to two trains per hour with earlier start times to Stansted Airport (seeking to avoid adversely affecting services to stations along the route, e.g. Melton Mowbray and Oakham).

Improving local rail connectivity for residents and businesses in the south west of the county to destinations in the West Midlands would also help to provide improved access to longer distance services on the West Coast Main Line and the HS2 western leg.

**iv. To ensure that rail access and economic development are planned together.** All nine Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are undertaking work on a Strategic Growth Plan. This will seek to identify where future growth will be accommodated and what infrastructure is required to support it. As rail continues to play an increasingly important role, access to the rail network will become correspondingly more important. Existing rail car parks will become full, and cannot be expanded for ever. Ensuring joined-up planning means:

- Better spatial and transport planning around stations, and some intervention to increase railway car parking within the limits imposed by the siting of the stations.
- Planning new development with access to the rail network as a key consideration.
- Identifying potential new strategic access points to the rail network. This could involve long term consideration of “Parkway” sites<sup>1</sup>.

**v. To support modal shift from cars and lorries to sustainable transport.** Local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire are seeking to promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to the private car and are fully supportive of initiatives to transfer freight from road to rail. This strategy supports modal shift where possible and helps to support the transfer of freight from road to rail.

The Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire (2013-2020) outlines the need to reduce the county’s carbon footprint overall. The specific measures relevant to this document are:

- Rail electrification (including HS2)

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<sup>1</sup> While it may not be possible to *significantly* increase the number of railways stations in the county, access to the railway itself can be improved. Many of the measures in this strategy seek to support this aim.

- Shifting demand from one mode to another (increase in the number of short trips made by walking and cycling; increase in mode share for bus and rail trips; shift from road freight to rail freight).

Supporting modal shift from cars and lorries to sustainable transport means:

- Working with Network Rail and other partners to seek to improve access to/facilities at railway stations for those arriving by public transport, bike or on foot.
- Encouraging operators to provide/expand the provision of integrated ticketing between rail and bus services.
- Working through the planning process to seek to identify potential rail-based opportunities to help to meet Leicester and Leicestershire's housing and economic growth needs and aspirations<sup>2</sup> - where increased rail freight traffic might lead to the potential need for increased level crossing closures, the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire would wish to work with Network Rail to identify solutions that minimise impacts on the local road network and the local economy and potential for growth.

0.5. In seeking to deliver these priorities the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire will (as appropriate) seek to work with authorities elsewhere in the country to achieve rail projects that provide mutual benefits and that, so far possible, avoid any (unintentional) adverse implications.

### ACTION PLAN

0.6. Most of the developments outlined in this strategy will require Leicester and Leicestershire to act in a facilitating and lobbying role, rather than as direct funder or promoter of schemes. Partnerships are vital for making long term development happen, and require Leicester and Leicestershire to bring together for each project the support of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and devolved bodies, HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and the Department for Transport. **Leicester and Leicestershire stakeholders need to be active in political lobbying and rail industry development work.**

0.7. An initial, outline action plan is shown overleaf. It is important to note that these are high level actions, which will consist of a number of steps which will take place overtime. Further, the plan will 'live', continuing to evolve and develop in response to circumstances and any new opportunities that are presented. The strategy will be periodically reviewed to ensure that it remains relevant and of maximum use to the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire in seeking to secure investment in rail infrastructure and services serving the area and connecting it to other key destinations around the country.

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<sup>2</sup> For example through work to develop the Strategic Growth Plan.

| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Actions by Leicester, LLEP &amp; Leicestershire</b>   | <b>Funding</b>  | <b>Potential Date</b>   |
|--|--|---|---|
| MML Improvements, including line speed and capacity improvements; modern, appropriate quality rolling stock (pre and post electrification); electrification, | To achieve at the earliest opportunity sub-60 minute journey time Leicester to London with high quality rolling stock through prompt completion of line speed improvements, capacity works and electrification   | CP5/6 delivery plan   | 2023, but key elements before                                       |
| HS2  | Seek assurance from Government based on evidence for no reduction in Leicester to London service. Undertake further joint work to enforce benefits of northbound classic compatible services. Continue to lobby for a physical link between HS2 and the Midland Mainline in the area of the new East Midlands Hub station to enable improved connectivity with HS2 for residents across Leicester and Leicestershire | National  | Phase 2 Hybrid Bill TBC<br><br>Services operational 2033 and beyond |
| New service to Coventry  | Joint venture by CWLEP and LLEP. Join in project (Nuckle 3.1). Requires £53m investment at Nuneaton. Funding assembly is key.  | Growth funding bid through Midlands Connect/LEPs                                | 2019  |
| New service to Manchester  | Key is alliance with Transport for the North to present case to DfT. Need to include in specification for new EMT franchise. Key constraint is Hope Valley   | CP6 delivery of Hope Valley works.<br><br>Inclusion in EMT re-franchising spec. | 2020  |
| Birmingham and Stansted journey times and frequencies  | Project being led by Midlands Connect. Active involvement for lobbying.  | CP6 delivery plan   | 2022  |
| New service to Thames Valley   | Led by DfT. East West Rail project being delivered, but Bletchley-Bedford section will be in CP6. Key is presentation of investment case to DfT and NR.  | Completion of CP5 works Oxford-Bletchley. Inclusion Bletchley-Bedford in CP6.   | 2022  |
| New service to Leeds   | As per Manchester. Key constraint is north of Sheffield.   | Inclusion of works north of Sheffield in CP6                                    | 2024  |

## 1. THE COMMISSION

1.1. SLC Rail was commissioned in May 2015 by the Leicestershire County Council along with Leicester City Council and Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to assess the adequacy of rail industry plans to support the economic development of the county as set out in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). This analysis was to identify priorities for rail service development and associated infrastructure investment that would be needed to support the SEP, including the following specific objectives:

- Develop a rail strategy to support Leicester and Leicestershire’s economic growth out to 2043
- Maximise the benefits to Leicester and Leicestershire to be gained from enhancement of the Midland Main Line to London
- Maximise the potential of HS2 and mitigate adverse impacts
- Place the study in the context of wider regional and national connectivity to support:
  - New jobs
  - Business to business connectivity
  - New housing and economically active citizens
- Influence the rail industry regarding the prioritisation of key rail enhancements

1.2. The remainder of the report is divided into the following sections, describing:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Section 2 | The political and industrial context within which decisions on the plan must be taken                       |
| Section 3 | The Rail Industry Planning Process  |
| Section 4 | Leicestershire’s rail network, including current services and capacity constraints                          |
| Section 5 | Enhancements to the rail network planned in the near to medium future                                       |
| Section 6 | Determining Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Priorities (The results of the Gross Value Added (GVA) study) |
| Section 7 | Enhancements to the Leicester – London service and the longer-term effects of HS2                           |
| Section 8 | Options for Enhanced Train Services   |
| Section 9 | Summary and next steps  |

## 2. CONTEXT

### 2.1. THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

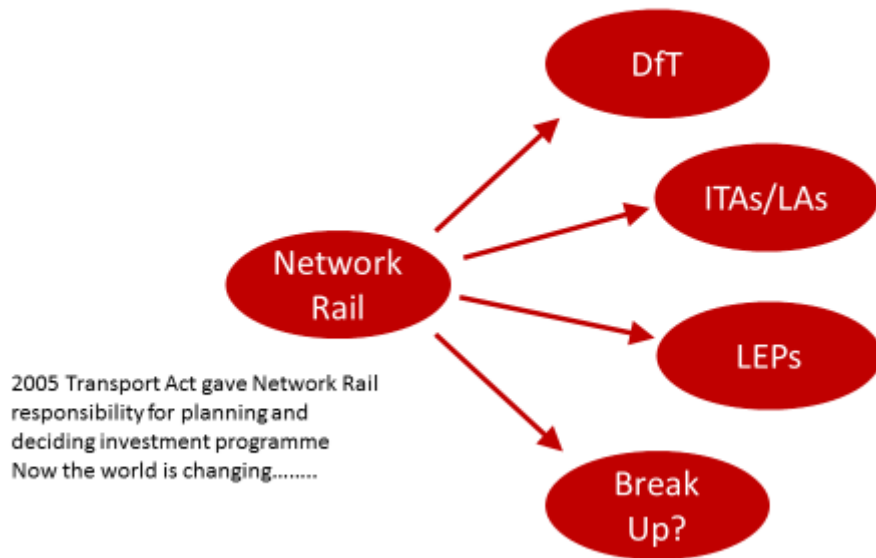
2.1.1. The Government is moving toward increasing regional devolution, including transport planning. For example, a new “West Midlands” rail franchise has been proposed (either as a stand-alone entity or as a business unit within a re-let “London Midland” franchise), and it is intended that significant elements of this franchise will be specified locally. In addition, the role of regional bodies such as Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Authorities in sponsoring and funding rail improvements is increasing via Local Growth Funds, Devolution Deals and mechanisms such as Prudential Borrowing.

2.1.2. In July 2015, the Government announced a review of Network Rail’s spending plans for the remainder of the Control Period 5 (2014 to 2019), headed by its new Chairman, Peter Hendy; along with a further review concerning financing of the rail industry, headed by Nicola Shaw, Chief Executive of “High Speed 1” (the Channel Tunnel Rail Link). These reviews were prompted by increasing concerns over delays and projected overspends on some of the large schemes committed within Network Rail’s funding settlement, and some, including electrification of the Midland Main Line, were put “on pause” until the review was completed. A new plan for electrification was announced in September 2015, with project phasing and delayed outputs.

2.1.3. The Shaw Report was issued in March 2016 and made the following recommendations:

1. A long-term government vision for rail to provide political context and objectives to inform planning in the supply chain.
2. Independent Regulation of Network Rail Routes to deliver further efficiencies and better value for taxpayers, with clearer definition of the respective roles and responsibilities between government and Network Rail.
3. More opportunities for Third Party funding and financing of network enhancements, including increased contestability in the supply chain.
4. Creation of a new organisation within Network Rail (referred to as a “Freight Route”) to provide a single point of contact and decision making with regard to freight traffic.
5. A new Route organisation within Network Rail to provide additional focus for the north of England
6. Creation of “Stakeholder Panels” with representatives from Local Government and Passenger Groups.
7. Creation of a Cross Industry Group, including Trade Union representation, to promote diversity and improve training across the industry workforce.
8. Enabling Train Operators to set targets for their local routes by means of a scorecard system.

2.1.4. It is still too early to assess the effects these recommendations might have on future investment plans, but it is possible that many of Network Rail’s current powers and responsibilities could be devolved to other bodies as shown below in diagram 1 below:



**Diagram 1 Potential future split of Network Rail's functions and responsibilities**

2.1.5. In a statement on 6 December 2016, Transport Minister Chris Grayling restated the Government's intention to challenge Network Rail's perceived monopoly and increase contestability in the market, by giving Train Operating Companies responsibility for infrastructure maintenance and renewal in future franchises. In addition, it was also announced that development and delivery of the East West Rail project is to be handed "early in 2017" to a new organisation, independent of Network Rail, with a specific remit to secure increased private sector involvement in the project, including raising private capital. It appears to be the government's intention that this organisation will eventually transfer entirely to the private sector, and will own, operate and maintain the East West Route, setting a precedent for extension of private ownership to other parts of the rail network.

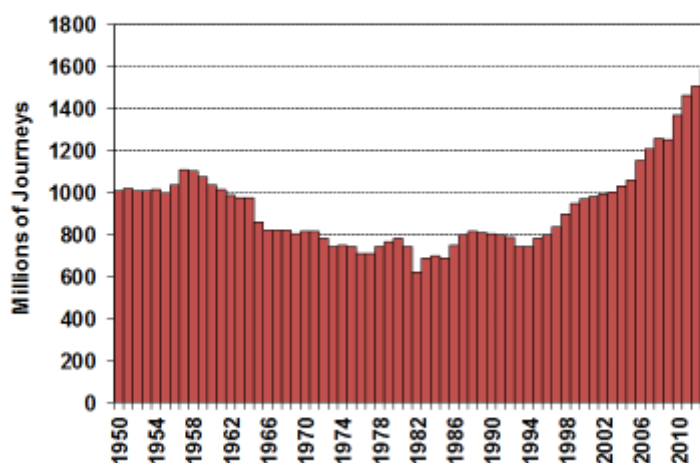
### 2.2. THE RAIL INDUSTRY CONTEXT

2.2.1. The national rail network supports productivity and economic activity by:

- Facilitating travel to and from work
- Providing businesses with access to larger and more specialised labour markets
- Improving contacts between businesses
- Transporting freight and goods

2.2.2. It is widely accepted that journey times between cities can be directly correlated to economic development, and rail transport can show distinct advantages for centre-to-centre journeys compared to other modes such as road, where the use of congested local and trunk networks is often unavoidable, and air, which requires additional time for travel to and from airports and is, in any case, often not a feasible option for short-to-medium distances. However, notwithstanding the advantages rail often offers in providing direct access between population centres, the creation of easily accessible out-of-town transport hubs offering easy interchange between modes has also been shown to act as a catalyst for new development and economic activity.

2.2.3. Since 1994 the number of passengers using the railway has doubled, as demonstrated by the graph in diagram 2 below.



**Diagram 2 Increases in passenger usage**

2.2.4. Although there is no clear consensus either within or outside the rail industry about the underlying reasons behind this significant increase in demand, there are clearly important macro-economic drivers at work in addition to the actions that the industry has taken to market and promote rail travel. Factors might include:

- Despite the recession, there has been an overall increase in economic prosperity and consumer spending.
- Following a decade in which there was little motorway investment, no major motorways have been built since the M6 Toll Road in 2003.
- Road congestion, particularly in and around urban areas, combined with the difficulty and cost of parking, have combined to make rail a more attractive option for regular commuting into cities and major towns.
- Until 2009, average earnings were going up faster than commuter fares, which from privatisation until 2004 were pegged to annual increases of RPI minus 1%. However, this trend has been reversed in more recent years, because of government policy to reduce public subsidy in favour of funding a higher proportion of industry costs through farebox revenue.
- House price increases and widening regional variations in average property prices mean that it is often economically sensible for people to live in a cheaper location and commute to work.
- Faster average train speeds have progressively resulted in reduced journey times, meaning that the distance over which commuting is viable has continued to increase, a trend that has been evident since at least the 1960's.
- There has been substantial growth both in the student population and the elderly since the early 1990s, both groups who might, for various reasons, be more inclined to use public rather than private transport.
- Train frequencies have generally increased, with regular-interval "clockface" timetable patterns on nearly all major routes. Through journey opportunities have improved.
- Standards of customer service, and the customer's perception of the rail industry generally, has improved.

2.2.5. Although significant sums have been invested by Network Rail over the last 15 years to increase the capacity and capability of the network, and similar investment has been made by Leasing Companies and Train Operators in rolling stock, parts of the rail network are now operating, to all intents and purposes, at or near full capacity. Except at the margins, the introduction of any new train service will almost certainly require investment in additional infrastructure and rolling stock to support it.

2.2.6. The prospect of continuing expansion of demand for rail services, driven by economic growth of the sort envisaged in the LEP SEP over the coming decades, has led to the establishment of an industry "Long Term Planning Process" (LTPP), managed by Network Rail, but with wide involvement from industry and economic stakeholders. The intention is that this process will set out "choices for funders" (the principal but by no means only one being Central Government) for potential inclusion in Network Rail's funding settlements for future 5-year Control Periods (in particular the forthcoming Control Period 6 between 2019 and 2024) and in associated franchise specifications for Train Operators.

2.2.7. For its size, Leicestershire has a relatively low density of rail routes, and connectivity to and from the region is therefore poor compared to other regions of similar size and importance. The LLEP recognises that improving rail links both within and, particularly, outside the region is



likely to generate significant economic growth and can, therefore, play a significant role in meeting the targets set out in the SEP.

2.2.8. However, the rail network in the region is already largely used to or near its maximum theoretical capacity, and it is also recognised that substantial investment will be required to provide the additional capability that will be needed to enable the introduction of new and improved services, not only to meet Leicester and Leicestershire's own requirements, but also national strategic needs. In developing train service options and plans for investment in the network, therefore, due attention needs to be given to how they fit in to a wider national context, to facilitate lobbying and bidding at the appropriate level of government.

### 2.3 LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN

2.3.1. The Leicester and Leicestershire economy has an estimated gross value of £19.4bn per annum, and supports about 33,000 trading businesses providing some 435,000 jobs. The area possesses valuable economic assets, including the largest distribution park in Europe, the UK's second largest freight airport and a growing manufacturing sector, while its central location provides good access, primarily by road, to other parts of the country.

2.3.2. The Leicestershire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) covering the years 2014 to 2020 was submitted to Central Government in March 2014. The stated aims of the plan to 2020 are to:

- Create 19,000 of the 45,000 new jobs planned in the long-term
- Lever £2.5bn of private investment and
- Increase Gross Value Added (GVA) by £4bn from £19bn to £23bn.

by means of integrating the previously published European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF), City Deal and Growth Deal Strategies and leverage of new funding.

2.3.3. The major risks to the region's economy are identified as:

- A lack of suitable undeveloped land for further expansion in the logistics and manufacturing sectors.
- Poor quality public realm and derelict sites requiring land assembly and infrastructure.
- Inadequate transport infrastructure causing congestion and resulting in increased business costs.
- Lack of support for the 70% of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that have growth plans.
- Lack of skills in key sectors.
- The low numbers of young people choosing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers.

2.3.4. Highlights of the SEP include:

**Leicester Launchpad** - provides a major development and growth opportunity for Leicester focussed on the Waterside and Abbey Meadows regeneration areas and the city centre. This

'Strategic Regeneration Area' delivers substantial housing, commercial and leisure/cultural developments on a cluster of development sites and creates 6,000 jobs.

**East Midlands Gateway Strategic Freight Interchange** - a 250-acre distribution and logistics development alongside East Midlands Airport and the M1, with a rail terminal providing up to 6 million sq. ft. of large scale warehousing to establish the UK's largest multi modal hub creating over 7,000 new jobs.

**Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Parks (LUSEP)** - an exceptional opportunity to develop an internationally significant centre for knowledge based employment. The Park is already one of the largest developments of its kind and will provide as many as 4,000 additional jobs and lever private investment of up to £200m.

**MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone** - MIRA Technology Park is a designated Enterprise Zone and will provide 1.75 million sq. ft. high quality R&D space on an 80-hectare estate, making it the largest transport sector R&D technology park in Europe. It will create over 2,000 direct high value jobs and over 3,000 indirect jobs.

- 2.3.5. Other proposals include measures to support innovation by providing direct funding and economic intelligence to businesses and using City Deal and European Structural and Investment Funding (ESIF) to improve skills and training.

### 3. THE RAIL INDUSTRY PLANNING PROCESS

#### 3.1 THE LONG TERM PLANNING PROCESS

3.1.1. Following Network Rail's publication of market studies in 2013, a series of regional and route based studies into long-term investment requirements is now underway. The East Midlands Route Study was published in March 2016, and the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study was published in draft for consultation in June 2016. In addition, further studies relevant to this report now in progress include:

- Midlands Connect – a grouping of transport authorities across the Midlands in support of the Midlands Engine. Has produced an “Economic Impact Study” (May 2015). This work is now evolving into an emerging Transport Strategy, which will include transport infrastructure of regional and national importance.
- Network Rail is undertaking development work on options for the route of the proposed East West Rail “Central Section” between Bedford and Cambridge. The first phase of this work, undertaken by Atkins Consulting, looked at priority origin and destination locations across the South Midlands (“East West Rail Central Section – Conditional Outputs Statement” - August 2014), and the second phase of this work is looking at how the strategic business case for the line can be enhanced by using the East West route to provide through services not currently possible on the existing network. This includes potential direct trains from the East Midlands to the Thames Valley, South Coast or West Country via Leicester and either Bedford and Bletchley or Coventry and Banbury. As noted above, the Secretary of State for Transport announced on 6 November 2016 that responsibility for further development of East West Rail would be transferred to a new organisation “early in 2017”, with a remit to increase private sector involvement in the East West Rail project, including eventual private ownership of the completed route. It is clearly as yet too early to assess the implications of this announcement for delivery timescales and train services.
- Work undertaken by SLC Rail to develop rail strategies for Warwickshire and Coventry.

3.1.2. These studies look forward as far as 2043, and are intended to show a long term strategic direction, as well as to identify “options for funders” for schemes in Network Rail's Control Period 6 (2019-24). “Indicative Train Service Specifications” for several main routes are already in circulation.

3.1.3. There is therefore a substantial body of work being undertaken, some of which inevitably reflects local agendas, but most of which is remarkably consistent both in terms of the conclusions being drawn, and in reflecting a desire to capitalise on the opportunity the railway presents to support economic growth. The outcomes identified in this strategy are, as far as possible, consistent with the conclusions that have either been drawn or are emerging in these other reports, as well as providing an evidence base that Leicester and Leicestershire stakeholders can use to influence decision makers, including funding bodies.

### 3.2 INDICATIVE TRAIN SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS (ITSS)

3.2.1. Through the route planning process Network Rail has developed a series of line maps showing a possible level of train service in 2043. There are two important points to note about these diagrams:

- The delivery of enhanced train services is a matter for funders and for the specification of future franchises. That is why there is no ITSS for earlier years.
- The driver for additional train services shown on the 2043 ITSS is not just demand growth, but, more importantly, regional and national connectivity improvements that are forecast to be required. This is an important distinction.
- These factors mean that prioritisation for the improved connectivity lies not with Network Rail or indeed principally with the rail industry, but with funders. New connectivity plans that have a business case can be implemented when the time is right for funders and the main issue is about the prioritisation and funding assembly, once Network Rail has delivered the necessary Network capacity improvements. Of course, not all capacity schemes have to be funded through the Network Rail Periodic Review process, but schemes likely to have a major impact on capacity will generally be delivered as part of resignalling schemes.

3.2.2. However, if Network Rail's infrastructure capacity schemes are "enablers" to allow future enhanced connectivity, it is important for the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire to lobby for inclusion of valuable schemes in the CP6 settlement.



### 4. LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE'S RAIL NETWORK

#### 4.1 THE CURRENT NETWORK

- 4.1.1. The Midland Main Line linking London (St Pancras), Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield runs south-to-north through the county, with stations at Market Harborough, Leicester, Syston, Sileby, Barrow-upon-Soar and Loughborough. There is also an east-west main line, running from Birmingham through Nuneaton and Leicester, and then onwards to Peterborough and East Anglia, with stations at Hinckley, Narborough, South Wigston, Melton Mowbray and Oakham.
- 4.1.2. Two freight routes lie partly within Leicestershire. The first links the Midland Main Line at Knighton Junction (approximately 2 miles south of Leicester) with Burton upon Trent via Coalville, and is used mainly for aggregates traffic from Bardon Hill Quarries. Since the closure of Drakelow Power Station, the western section of this line between Bardon Hill and Burton sees very little traffic. The other mostly freight line (there is only one passenger service per day) is in the east of the county, running from Kettering via Corby to Manton junction, south of Oakham, and forming part of a loop line running parallel to the MML between Kettering and Syston, avoiding Leicester.

#### 4.2 PASSENGER SERVICES

- 4.2.1. Services on the Midland Main Line are operated by East Midlands Trains using 7- and 8-coach class 254 High Speed Trains (HSTs) and Class 222 "Meridian" Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs) in 4-, 5- and 7-car formations. The HSTs are concentrated mainly on the London – Nottingham services. East Midlands Trains also operates the Leicester – Lincoln service, mainly with class 153 single-car DMUs.
- 4.2.2. Cross Country Trains operates both the Local Birmingham – Leicester and Birmingham – Stanstead Airport service, using Class 170 DMUs in 2- or 3-car formations although longer trains formed of two units coupled in multiple are diagrammed on certain peak hour services.
- 4.2.3. Standard off-peak service patterns at the county stations are:

##### **Leicester**

- 2 (non-stop) trains per hour between London and Sheffield via Derby.
- 2 (semi-fast) trains per hour between London and Nottingham.
- 1 train per hour between Birmingham and Peterborough, Cambridge and Stanstead Airport.
- 1 train per hour between Birmingham and Leicester.
- 1 train per hour between Leicester and Lincoln via Nottingham.

##### **Market Harborough**

- 2 trains per hour between London and Nottingham.

##### **Syston, Sileby and Barrow-on-Soar**

- 1 train per hour between Leicester and Lincoln (some extended to Sleaford) via Nottingham.

### Loughborough

1 train per hour between London and Sheffield via Derby.

1 train per hour between London and Nottingham.

1 train per hour between Leicester and Lincoln (some extended to Sleaford) via Nottingham.

### Narborough and South Wigston

1 Train per hour between Birmingham and Leicester via Nuneaton.

### Melton Mowbray and Oakham

1 train per hour between Birmingham and Stansted Airport via Peterborough and Cambridge.

These service patterns may be varied during peak hours, with some additional trains on certain routes.

## 4.3 FREIGHT SERVICES

4.3.1. Freight traffic is, by its nature, often unpredictable compared to the relative certainties of timetabled passenger services. Although many freight flows do establish themselves over a period of years, tonnages, times and even origin and destination points can vary at short notice, and individual flows may have limited lifespans as the demands of the market change. This pattern has been particularly prevalent since privatisation of the rail freight sector, as operators have changed their marketing and operating practices to enable them to compete more effectively with other modes of transport.

4.3.2. Routes through the East Midlands are vital freight arteries, and the all the main lines are designated as part of the Strategic Freight Network. While the predominant flows are along the Birmingham – Derby and Midland Main Lines, the cross-country route between Nuneaton, Leicester and Peterborough is gaining increased importance following completion of works to increase the loading gauge to allow the passage of larger containers.

4.3.3. There are several sites generating rail freight traffic in the area:

- Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station and British Gypsum plant, near Trent
- Mountsorrel aggregates depot
- Stud Farm Quarry, Stanton-under-Bardon
- Bardon Hill Quarry, near Coalville
- Corby Metals Terminal
- Ketton Cement Works.

4.3.4. The East Midlands rail network is used by a variety of different market sectors.

4.3.5. **Maritime intermodal**, consisting of container traffic to and from ports, primarily Southampton and Felixstowe, and the Channel Tunnel. Although much traffic from Felixstowe to the Midlands and North West England travels via London and the West Coast Main Line, an increasing volume is being routed via Peterborough and Leicester to join the West Coast Main

Line at Nuneaton, or onwards via Water Orton to terminals in the West Midlands. Locally, there is an intermodal terminal at Burton-on-Trent which receives traffic from Southampton on a weekly basis, which is routed, along with longer-distance intermodal traffic, via Oxford, Birmingham and Derby.

- 4.3.6. Works to increase Loading Gauge clearances are being undertaken between Birmingham and Derby, and onwards to Doncaster via the Erewash Valley. This will enable deep sea 9' 6" high containers to be routed from Southampton via the West Midlands to Yorkshire without the need for special wagons, generating significant intermodal growth on this corridor, as well as opening up opportunities for routing traffic between Felixstowe and the north of England via Toton and the Midland Main Line rather than the West Coast.
- 4.3.7. Other Loading Gauge improvements are planned on the Midland Main Line north of Bedford in parallel with the electrification programme. Once the East West Rail link from Oxford to Bedford is fully operational at the end of Control Period 6 in 2023, this will facilitate the routing of intermodal traffic from Southampton to Yorkshire and the north East via Bedford and Corby, rather than via the West Midlands.
- 4.3.8. Finally, Loading Gauge enhancements on the Derby to Stoke-on-Trent are being considered, offering another alternative route for container traffic between Felixstowe and the Manchester area.
- 4.3.9. In all cases, it is likely that other works on the wider network will be needed to fully exploit the opportunities offered by these enhancements around the East Midlands. Additionally, where increased rail freight traffic might lead to the potential need for increased level crossing closures, the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire would wish to work with Network Rail to identify solutions that minimise impacts on the local road network and the local economy and potential for growth.
- 4.3.10. **Domestic intermodal**, consisting mainly of the movement of containerised consumer goods within the UK. Again, the primary focus for this traffic is the West Coast Main Line, but some does pass along the Birmingham – Derby – Erewash Valley route on journeys to and from the North East and Scotland, and further growth in the market can be expected as new intermodal terminals, such as the one proposed at Castle Donington, are opened.
- 4.3.11. **Coal**. The pattern of coal flows nationally is inextricably linked to the demands of electricity generation, and is currently based mainly on foreign imports through ports such as Immingham. Coal-fired power stations are progressively being closed, but in 2014 the major power station at Ratcliffe-on-Soar, owned and operated by E.On, was fitted with catalytic reduction equipment to make it compliant with strict new emission regulations, securing the long-term future of both the station and the rail-borne coal flows from the east coast which fuel it.
- 4.3.12. In the interests of reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, some coal powered stations have been converted to burn biofuels. Biofuel has up to half the mass of coal, and this has



led to an increase in the number of trains per day serving the converted stations. Although E.On has no current plans to convert Ratcliffe-on Soar to biofuel operation, this cannot be ruled out in the long-term as emission regulations become more demanding, and, if it happens, would almost certainly result in an increase in the number of rail movements into and out of the site.

- 4.3.13. **Cement.** The long-established works at Ketton is now owned by Hanson, part of the Heidelberg Group, and produces around 10% of the UK's requirement for Portland Cement. Although much of the site's production is transported by road, daily trains are run mainly via the Midland Main Line to the North London terminal at Kings Cross, and occasionally to other sites elsewhere in the country. The proposed south-to-north chord at Manton Junction would allow these trains to be routed directly towards London via Corby, freeing capacity in the Leicester area and opening up additional opportunities to expand rail-borne traffic from this location.
- 4.3.14. **Aggregates** flows are highly dependent on the health of the construction industry, and peaks in demand tend to be linked with large infrastructure projects or major commercial developments. There are many quarries in the East Midlands, and, with demand centred very largely on South East England at the moment, the Midland Main Line is likely to continue as a major artery for stone traffic from the Buxton area, Bardon Hill, Stud Farm and other locations. At the southern end of the Midland Main Line, a loop is being provided at Sundon near Harlington (Bedfordshire) to facilitate the operation of longer and heavier aggregates trains from Derbyshire and Leicestershire to the London area.
- 4.3.15. Many coal-fired stations, including Ratcliffe-on-Soar, are fitted with flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) equipment, which uses limestone to reduce Sulphur Dioxide emissions. Both limestone and the gypsum produced as a by-product of the process are ideal bulk traffics for rail, and there are regular flows between the limestone quarries around Buxton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar, which will continue for the foreseeable future.
- 4.3.16. **Gypsum.** British Gypsum has established a plant at Ratcliffe-on-Soar to manufacture plasterboard using gypsum produced at the power station, but there is also some rail-borne gypsum traffic from the station to other manufacturing sites around the country.
- 4.3.17. **Iron Ore** is imported in considerable quantities through Immingham, and conveyed by rail through the East Midlands to steel works at Rotherham, the West Midlands and South Wales. Cutbacks in steel production at some major sites have recently been announced, allegedly due to the availability of cheap Chinese steel on European markets, and this will inevitably result in reduced demand for ore and therefore a reduction in the number of trains needed to move it from the ports.
- 4.3.18. **Metals.** The metals terminal at Corby receives daily services from South Wales, and finished steel from plants at Rotherham, Scunthorpe, North East England, the West Midlands and South Wales to various destinations passes along the East Midlands network daily. After a

period of decline, scrap metal movements to recycling plants have shown some growth in recent years.

4.3.19. **National Delivery Service.** Although not strictly a commercial freight operation, Network Rail's National Delivery Service (NDS), which supplies materials and equipment connected with railway engineering and construction projects, operates a significant number of trains on the network, and needs to be considered when planning future capacity improvements.

### 4.4 NETWORK CAPACITY

4.4.1. Analysis undertaken by Network Rail and the train operators has indicated that little spare capacity is available on the Midland Main Line. Although, in practical terms, rail capacity is notoriously difficult to measure, depending as it does on a range of variable factors such as signalling design and location, variations in line speeds, and the mixture of rolling stock used on the route and their relative performance characteristics, it is generally accepted that only one additional train path ("the sixth path" as it is often referred to) is available for use between London and Leicester.

4.4.2. How this path should be allocated will be the subject of many conflicting demands and interests. The value to local economic growth and sustainability of good quality connectivity to London is widely recognised, but it may be that in certain circumstances a case can be made that use of spare capacity for other purposes will produce a better return in terms of value added.

4.4.3. There appear to be opportunities to increase capacity on the Midland Main Line above the six trains per hour by investing in additional infrastructure. Until the late 1970's, the route was four-tracked throughout between London and Kettering, albeit mainly with fast passenger lines paralleled by goods lines to accommodate the heavy coal traffic from Nottinghamshire to London. The reduction in freight traffic from the 1960s onwards, resulted in the progressive removal of one of the goods lines leaving only three tracks over large sections of the route. Reinstatement of the fourth running line for mixed (passenger and freight) use would not be particularly difficult, and would release capacity on the existing fast lines for use by additional through services.

4.4.4. The installation of advanced transmission-based signalling systems similar in principle to those in use on certain intensively-worked urban rail systems and high speed main lines (the so-called "Digital Railway") has been proposed in certain quarters as a means of increasing capacity. These systems automatically regulate the intervals between trains running along the same line of route depending upon their relative speeds, making the most efficient use of the space available while preserving safe braking distances. In practice, the systems currently in use are mainly installed on relatively simple routes (whether high-speed main lines or low-speed urban systems such as the Docklands Light Railway) where all trains have very similar, if not always identical, speed, acceleration and braking characteristics. Much development work remains to be done to enable the technology to be used on intensively-used mixed-traffic railways like the UK network, where there are wide variations in the characteristics of the rolling stock. Nevertheless, in the longer-term, advanced signalling technology is likely to be developed to a point that will result in capacity improvements on conventional main lines such as the Midland Main Line.

- 4.4.5. Whatever spare capacity exists on the Midland Main Line, there are significant constraints at St. Pancras station itself which will directly influence how many additional services can be accommodated. The four platforms available following conversion of the station into St. Pancras International are already heavily occupied, and finding space to accommodate even one additional train per hour is likely to be difficult. Although each platform can accommodate two 4- or 5-car trains, the use of long Class 222, HST or “InterCity Express” (IEP) type units will require exclusive occupation of a platform.
- 4.4.6. Nevertheless, Network Rail’s various plans and proposals for upgrading the Midland Main Line described in Section 5.1 below do include several projects designed to increase capacity on the route which, if implemented, would allow enhancements in the number of trains that could be reliably accommodated. Furthermore, the issue does not have a direct bearing on the ability to deliver the priorities set out in this Strategy; the MML priority relates to journey time improvements (as opposed to the provision of additional train capacity) and the remaining priorities should not impose any additional platform capacity requirements at St. Pancras (for example because train services will be routing to the Thames Valley via the proposed East-West Line at Bedford).



## 5. PLANNED ENHANCEMENTS

### 5.1 MIDLAND MAIN LINE

5.1.1. Network Rail's Delivery Plan for Control Period 5 includes several projects affecting the Midland Main Line which are committed for completion in 2014-19, while the East Midlands Route Study, published in March 2016, contains proposals to accommodate growth up to 2043, which may be adopted for delivery in future Control Periods. Long-term proposals for locations north of Chesterfield are covered in the Yorkshire and Humber Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS), which was issued in 2009 and covers the period to 2039. It is likely that this latter document will be superseded by a further Route Study in due course.

5.1.2. Network Rail also published a Freight Route Study in 2007, covering the national network. The Birmingham to Peterborough line was identified as a key element of the strategy, requiring increased capacity through Leicester, and remodelling of the junctions at Wigston and Syston.

5.1.3. The various proposals for enhancements on the Midland Main Line contained in these documents include:

#### Committed in Control Period 5

- Electrification at 25Kv ac overhead:
  - Bedford to Nottingham via Leicester<sup>3</sup>
  - Kettering to Corby
  - Trent Junction to Sheffield via Derby.
- Removal of temporary and permanent speed restrictions at various locations through the track renewals programme.
- Platform lengthening up to 260m at Market Harborough station and easing curves through the town to increase line speeds
- Redoubling Kettering to Corby

#### Being considered for Control Period 6

- Grade separation at Wigston North Junction.
- Four-tracking Wigston North Junction to Syston Junction.
- Double tracking Syston South Junction to Syston East Junction.
- Platform lengthening up to 260m at Leicester station.
- New through platform 6 on east side and new bay platform 5 at north end at Leicester station.
- Resignalling between Kettering and Syston Junction to accommodate improved headways of between 5 and 3½ minutes.

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<sup>3</sup> It would now appear that the line will only be electrified as far as Corby by 2023, with the Government yet to confirm the timetable for the remainder of the electrification northwards through Leicestershire and beyond.

- Platform lengthening up to 260m at Loughborough station.

### **Being considered for future Control Periods beyond 2024**

- Four-tracking Kettering to Wigston North Junction.
- High Speed Junction with South Leicestershire line at Kilby Bridge.
- Four-tracking Oakham to Langham Junction.
- New south-to-east chord at Manton Junction to allow through running Corby – Peterborough.
- Remodelling at Trent Junction (including grade separation) to segregate conflicting traffic flows.

### **Other potential enhancements not currently being considered in long-term planning**

- Further electrification:
  - Corby to Syston Junction
  - Trent Junction to Chesterfield via Erewash Valley
  - Nottingham to Trowell Junction
  - Sheffield to Doncaster and Leeds
  - Chesterfield to Rotherham via Beighton
  - Beighton to Sheffield.
- Remodelling at Mountsorrel Aggregates Terminal to eliminate conflicting movements.

5.1.4. In June 2015, the government announced a temporary pause in parts of Network Rail’s investment programme for CP5, including Midland Main Line electrification, pending a review of budgets and delivery resources. On 30 September 2015, work on Midland Main Line electrification was resumed, but with revised timescales now including Bedford to Kettering and Corby by 2019 and Kettering to Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield by 2023, although the Government still has yet to commit to the 2023 final completion date.

## **5.2 EAST MIDLANDS GATEWAY STRATEGIC FREIGHT INTERCHANGE**

5.2.1. “East Midlands Gateway” is a multimodal freight interchange proposed by a private developer, Roxhill (Kegworth) Limited, located on a site between Castle Donington and Kegworth, and adjacent to both East Midlands Airport and Junction 24 on the M1 Motorway. Designed as a “Strategic Rail Freight Interchange” in accordance with the Government’s draft Policy Statement on National Networks published in December 2013, the facility includes rail-connected warehousing and container handling facilities directly linked to the road and rail networks and the airport, with provision to accommodate on-site manufacturing and processing activities in the future. Up to 7,000 new permanent jobs are expected be directly created once the facility is fully operational, in addition to more transient employment during the construction phases<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Eastmidlandsgateway.co.uk

5.2.2. The proposal is also designated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and, as such, was the subject of a Development Consent Order submitted to the National Infrastructure Directorate of the Planning Inspectorate on 29 August 2014. The Inspectorate's report of recommendation for the application was issued to the Secretary of State on 12 October 2015, and the Secretary of State's decision was approved in January 2016<sup>5</sup>.

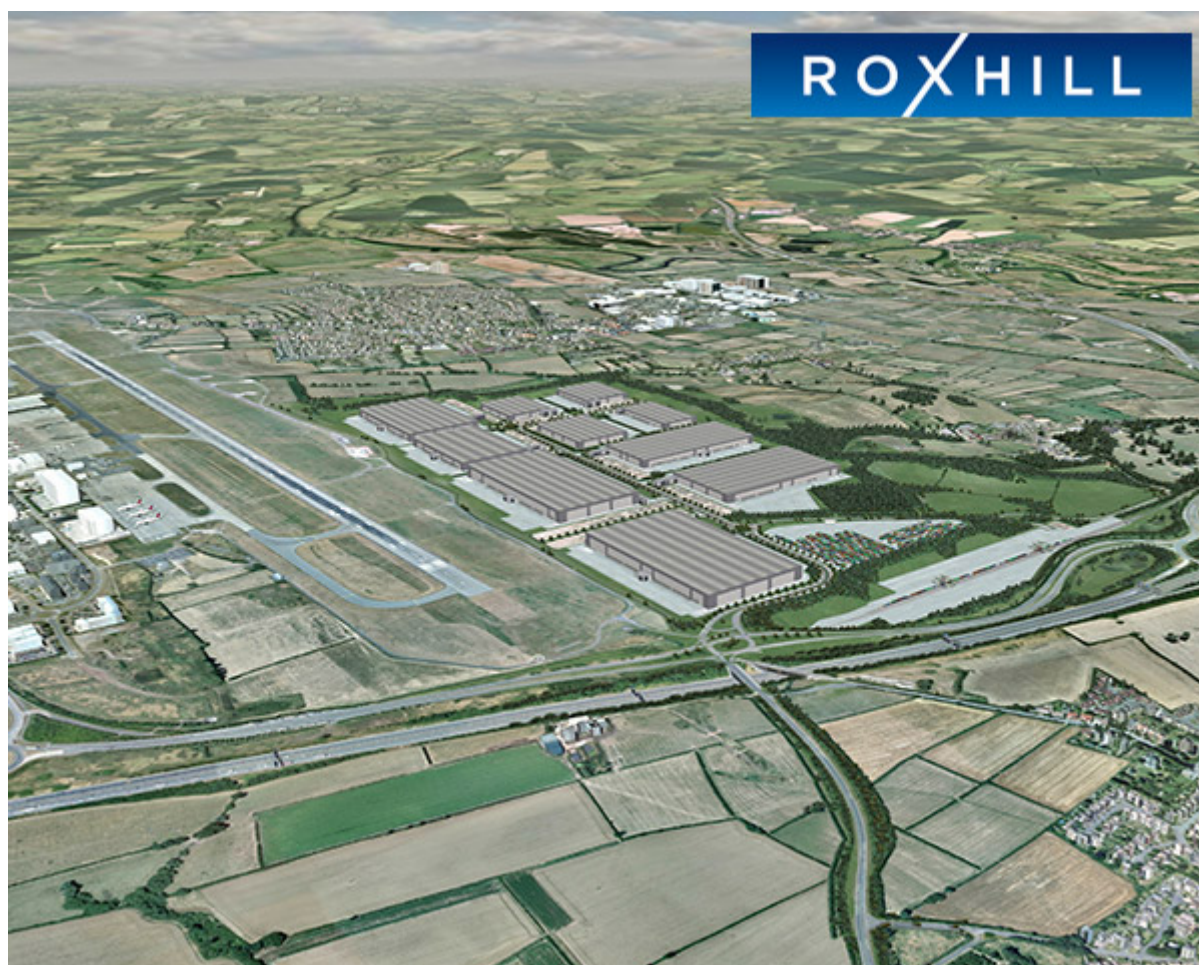
5.2.3. The specification for the development includes:

- A rail freight terminal designed to accommodate up to 16 intermodal trains per day (presumably including both inwards and outwards movements), each up to 775 metres long;
- Container storage and HGV parking;
- Up to 557,414 square metres of rail-served warehousing and ancillary service buildings;
- A new branch line connecting the terminal to the Sheet Stores Junction (Trent) to Stenson Junction freight railway, with a west-facing junction located just north of Hemington;
- New and improved road infrastructure connecting the site to the M1 Motorway, A6, A50 and A453 trunk roads and East Midlands Airport;
- Alterations to public rights of way and the creation of new publicly accessible landscaped open areas;
- Bus interchange facilities to provide links to local communities.

5.2.4. The original proposal for HS2 was to run it HS2 in tunnel beneath East Midlands Airport before emerging to cut across part of the East Midlands Gateway site on its way to the East Midlands Interchange station at Toton. The review published in November 2016 has stated that the Secretary of State is minded to amend the route alignment so that it follows the A42 more closely on a mixture of cutting and embankment, remaining to the east of the road. This would avoid the need to tunnel under East Midlands Airport and the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. A physical connection between the terminal and HS2 is not contemplated.

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<sup>5</sup> [Infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/east-midlands-gateway-rail-freight-interchange](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/east-midlands-gateway-rail-freight-interchange)



5.2.5. Network Rail is aware of the Gateway development, and it is referred to in the 2012 East Midlands Network Specification, but so far, little development of a train service specification has taken place. Although it will undoubtedly take some years for the planned maximum capacity of 16 trains per day to be reached, no stated assumptions have been made by the developers about likely origin and destination points, routeing, daily tonnages or times of operations. It is therefore difficult to draw firm conclusions at this stage about the effect of the terminal on the local rail network, or any enhancements that might be required to accommodate the new traffic arising from it.

5.2.6. The main maritime intermodal flows conveying imported and exported goods in containers are to and from Southampton and to and from the east coast ports, particularly Felixstowe. The preferred route for trains between East Midlands Gateway and the south coast would probably be via Burton on Trent and Birmingham, but parts of this route are already oversubscribed and, in the longer-term, it may be necessary to consider the use of the Midland Main Line to Bedford and thence via East West to Oxford as an alternative. This would require spare or additional capacity not only on the Midland Main Line itself, but possibly enhancement of the Burton – Leicester route, which, although under-used west of Bardon Hill, is subject to relatively low maximum speeds and limited signalling capacity.

5.2.7. Given the lack of a direct connection from the new branch towards Trent, routing of traffic bound for the east coast ports is more problematical. The quickest and least disruptive



solution might be to reverse trains at Burton on Trent, then retrace their route back to Trent, before proceeding via Loughborough, Oakham and Peterborough to Felixstowe. The only alternative (if reversal is to be avoided) would be a rather roundabout route via Tamworth, Walsall, Coventry and the West Coast and North London lines. In the very-long term, East West Rail Central section might offer an alternative provided a north-to-east connection was installed at Bedford.

5.2.8. Domestic flows are harder to predict, as there are a multitude of potential destinations, but again, the lack of a direct connection towards the east, and then north, appears to be a handicap. The potential that East Midlands Airport might offer for import/export traffic conveyed by rail is also an unknown factor, as no similar freight terminal in such close proximity to a major international airport exists elsewhere in the UK.

5.2.9. Finally, the ability to exploit opportunities for new flows to and from the terminal will, as always, be dependent on the availability of spare capacity at numerous points elsewhere on the national network, and the relative value and priority of the various traffics competing to use it.

5.2.10. Significant further work will need to be done to identify potential traffic flows, establish how they might realistically be exploited, and examine what further enhancement of both the local and national rail network will be required to accommodate them in the longer-term.

### 5.3 EAST WEST RAIL

5.3.1. The East West Rail project is a proposal, originally promoted by a Consortium of Local Authorities and other organisations, to create a new orbital main line between Oxford and East Anglia. The East West Rail Consortium's primary objective was to create improved transport links in support of economic regeneration and growth, particularly around Milton Keynes, Bedford and Aylesbury Vale, but it was also recognised that, by providing a direct link between the principal radial main lines from London, the route had potential to create and exploit new passenger and freight markets.

5.3.2. The project was divided into three phases:

#### **“Western Section”**

Upgrading the existing route between Oxford and Claydon (Bucks)

Upgrading the existing route between Aylesbury and Claydon

Reopening the disused route between Claydon and Bletchley

Upgrading the existing route between Bletchley and Bedford.

#### **“Central Section”**

Creating a new link between Bedford and Cambridge, by means of reopening closed railways, constructing entirely new lines, or a combination of both. Network Rail is currently working in collaboration with the East West Rail Consortium and the DfT to develop options for the route of the Central Section with a view to assessing works for potential inclusion as committed schemes in Control Period 6 and beyond.

**“Eastern Section”**

Upgrading existing railways in East Anglia to provide additional capacity and improved capability between Cambridge and the East Coast.

5.3.3. The Western Section was adopted by the Department for Transport (DfT) as a committed scheme in the High Level Output Statement (HLOS) for Railway Control Period 5 (CP5) in 2014 – 2019.

5.3.4. The route between Oxford and Bicester also forms an integral part of the “Evergreen 3 Phase 2” project to provide a new service between London (Marylebone) and Oxford via High Wycombe. Delivery of this project by 2016 is a Chiltern Railways Franchise Commitment, and it was recognised that economies could be obtained by constructing the additional infrastructure required for later introduction of EWR services as part of the Chiltern project. The decision was therefore taken to undertake additional works, including double track throughout and enhanced signalling capacity, funded from the East West Rail budget, as part of the Chiltern project.

5.3.5. Western Section is, therefore, now being designed and constructed by Network Rail in two phases:

- Phase 1a Bicester to Oxford Parkway
- Phase 1b Oxford Parkway to Oxford
- Phase 2 Bicester and Aylesbury to Milton Keynes and Bedford

5.3.6. Phase 1a opened on 26 October 2015 with the introduction of a half-hourly service operated by Chiltern Railways between London Marylebone and Oxford Parkway. This service will be extended to Oxford under Phase 1b with the commencement of the new timetable on December 11 2016.

5.3.7. It is still officially planned that the East West Rail Oxford – Milton Keynes, Oxford – Bedford and Aylesbury – Milton Keynes services will follow by the end of Control Period 5 in March 2019, but the need to obtain legal powers, the volume of work required to bring the line back into operational condition and the issues arising from the interface with HS2 at Claydon mean that there must be considerable doubt about whether this date is realistically achievable, and it is more likely that completion will be sometime during Control Period 6 in 2019 – 2024.

5.3.8. Opening of the Western section will provide a direct link between the Midland, West Coast and Great Western Main Lines, potentially offering new opportunities for through journeys between the East Midlands and Oxford, the Thames Valley, the West Country and the South Coast, which are currently only available with a change of train en route. However, while the current infrastructure provides at least some spare capacity between Bletchley and Bedford, the early introduction of through services to and from the Midland Main Line before MML upgrading is completed is unlikely because:

1. The current connection between the Midland Main Line and the East West route at Bedford is unsuitable for regular through services, having a very low speed restriction both at Bedford Midland station itself, and along the sharply-curved single line through

Bedford St. Johns station, which severely restricts capacity and would import a high degree of performance risk to both East West and Midland Main Line services.

Improvements to the connection are possible, but the future route of the Central section east of Bedford is at a very early stage of development, and various options are still being considered, some of which involve a completely new alignment, independent of the present route via Bedford St. Johns. While this offers opportunities to radically improve the connection between the Midland Main Line and East West Rail and eliminate the problems described above, clearly no commitments can be made until a final route for Central section is selected.

2. The Bedford – Bletchley route is currently very much a secondary line, with basic (although quite modern) signalling, a relatively low maximum line speed of 60mph and other restrictions such as many level crossings. Upgrading this part of the route was not included in the scope of works adopted by DfT in 2012, and, although acceptable for the proposed hourly Oxford – Bedford fast service, these restrictions would adversely affect long-distance cross-country services through extended journey times, even if spare capacity was available to accommodate them.

5.3.9. Two recent developments have introduced further uncertainties regarding the scope and timescales for the project:

1. The announcement by the DfT in November 2016 that the Great Western Main Line electrification will extend only as far as Didcot rather than Oxford, thus reducing the case for onwards electrification of the East West route from Oxford to Bletchley. It is likely, therefore, that EWR will be operated, at least initially, by diesel or hybrid electric/diesel traction.
2. As noted earlier, the announcement by the Secretary of State for Transport that responsibility for further development and delivery of East West Rail will be transferred to a new organisation “early in 2017”, with a greater focus on private sector involvement in financing, construction and eventually operation of the route.

## 5.4 HIGH SPEED 2

5.4.1. Construction of HS2 is planned in two phases, the first from London to Birmingham opening in 2026. The Phase 2 works, due for completion in 2033, will deliver two separate routes north of Birmingham, one via Crewe to Manchester, the other to Leeds. Diagram 3 overleaf shows the routes in schematic form.



Diagram 3 Schematic route of HS2

5.4.2. The eastern leg of HS2 to Leeds does not directly serve Leicestershire, but a “hub” station serving the East Midlands region is planned at Toton, on the site of the former marshalling yards, where HS2 will run parallel to the existing Erewash Valley line. The site is within 2Km of Junction 25 on the M1 motorway, and, in addition to extensive car parking facilities, various forms of public transport links from the station to both Derby and Nottingham city centres have been proposed, including:

- Heavy Rail services running on existing and new formations between Nottingham and Derby stations.
- “Tram Train” type operations over existing and new railway formations, extended into Nottingham city centre via the tram (NET) network, and possibly to Derby via new street routes.
- Extension of the Nottingham tram system to Toton over new segregated and street routes.
- New technology – monorail or maglev for example.
- Guided busways.
- Conventional buses, perhaps operating on segregated rights of way.

5.4.3. Since the publication of the latest plans for HS2 in November 2016, the outline for the Sheffield area has changed. Sir David Higgins’ report on Sheffield and South Yorkshire made a recommendation to pursue the M18/Eastern route option involving the creation of a southern

spur off the main high speed into Sheffield Midland and moving the alignment of the main north-south high speed route through South and West Yorkshire to follow a more easterly route. His report also identified the potential to create a connection back onto the HS2 mainline north of Sheffield and recommended that a study be undertaken to examine whether there is a case for a parkway station on the newly proposed route.

5.4.4. Leeds station will be located within the city just south of Leeds City station, to which it would be connected by dedicated pedestrian walkways. The line will then be inked to the conventional network to allow HS2 services to be extended to York and North-East England.

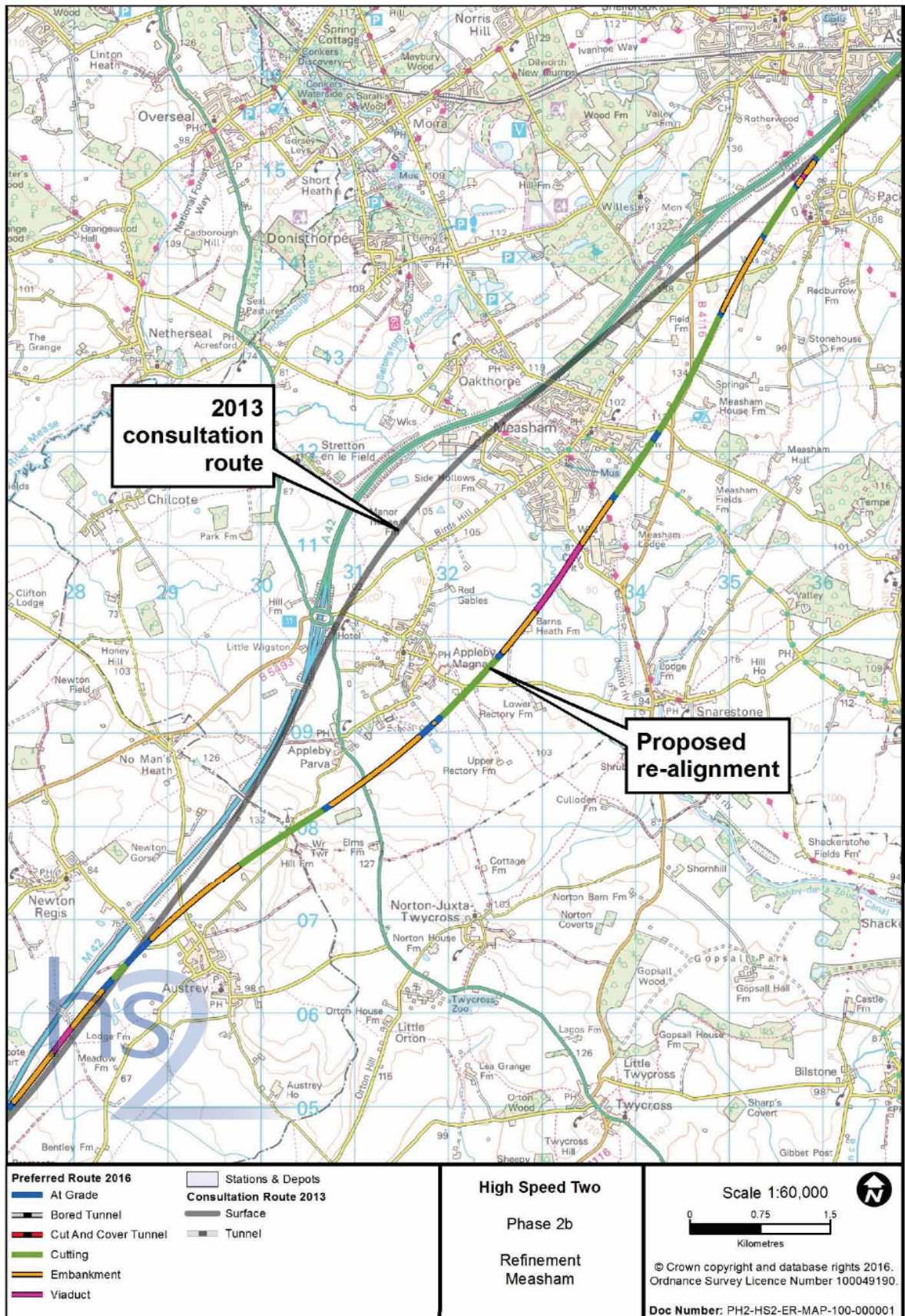
5.4.5. HS2 originally promoted the concept of a physical link between HS2 and the Midland Mainline in the East Midlands area to enable classic compatible trains to connect Leicester and Leicestershire with the North such as to Leeds and the North-East. While this does not feature in DfT's current plans, the project is still at an early enough stage of development to allow it to be incorporated if a sufficiently robust case can be made for doing so. This is a priority area for further work to strengthen the business case.

5.4.6. The November 2016 statement on HS2 has also revealed that there are some changes proposed to two sections of track running through Leicestershire, as follows:

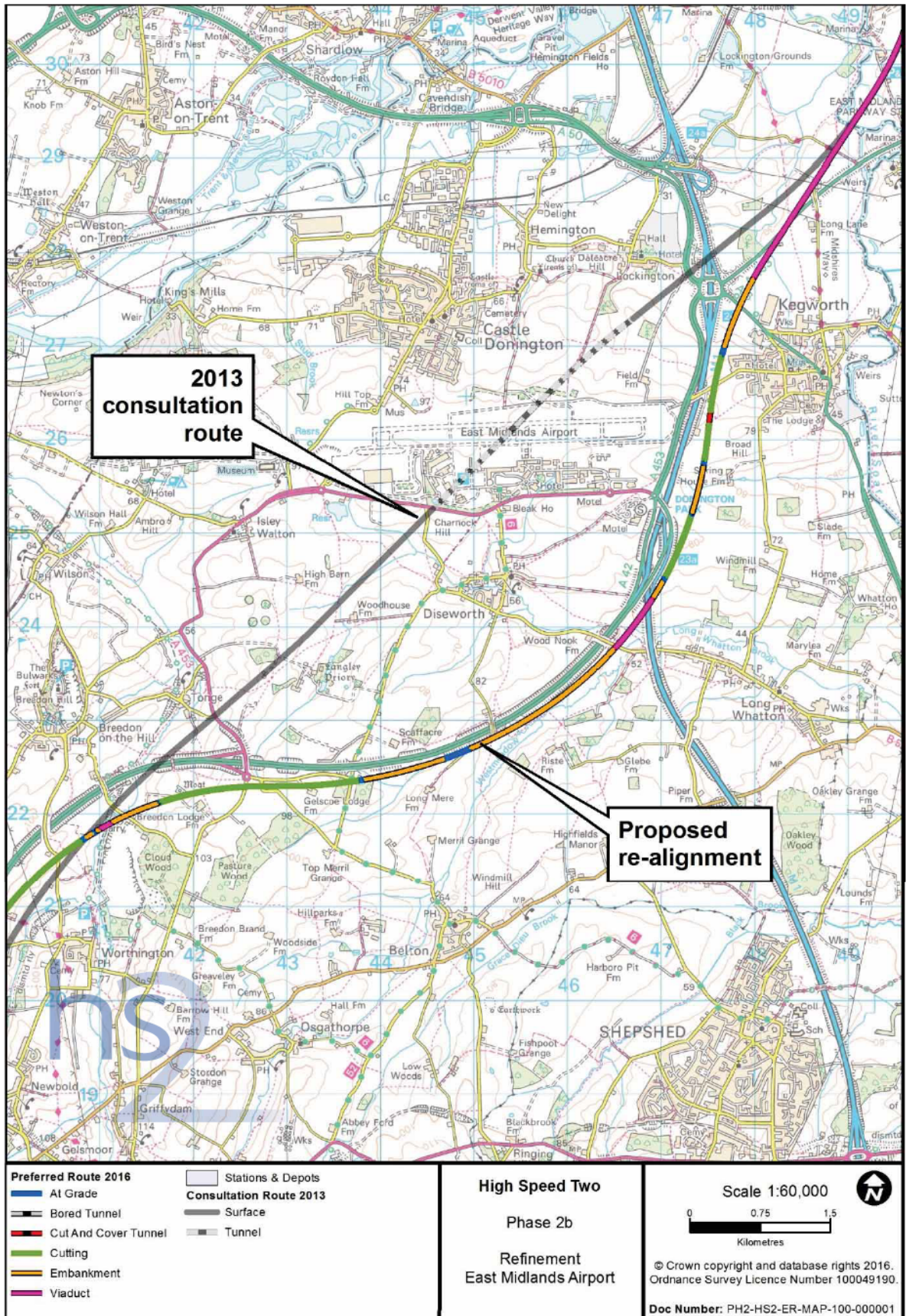
- To move the route so that it runs to the **east** of Measham, away from the M42/A42 corridor; avoiding a direct impact on the manufacturing businesses and the Measham Wharf major development site. This will mitigate impacts in Measham itself, but there will be some new impacts in the areas to the south and east of the town, as well as a new crossing of the River Mease which would require further assessment work.
- To amend the route alignment so that it follows the A42 more closely on a mixture of cutting and embankment, remaining to the **east** of the road. This would avoid the need to tunnel under East Midlands Airport and the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, and would reduce the impact on the communities at Tonge and Breedon on the Hill. This route would also remove the need for the 16m high crossing of the A42 proposed in the 2013/14 consultation and enable the track to sit lower in the landscape. The route then passes west of Kegworth in a cutting, which would be up to 12m deep as it crosses Ashby Road. The route would directly impact the two major residential development sites, 90 Ashby Road and the Curzon Coaker Trust site. It would then rise onto an embankment before crossing the River Soar floodplain on a viaduct, where it would rejoin the alignment presented during the 2013 consultation at Red Hill.

5.4.7. Both of these options are subject to consultation.

Route changes – Measham Section



Route Changes – East Midlands Airport Section (source: HS2 Ltd)







## 6. DETERMINING LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL PRIORITIES

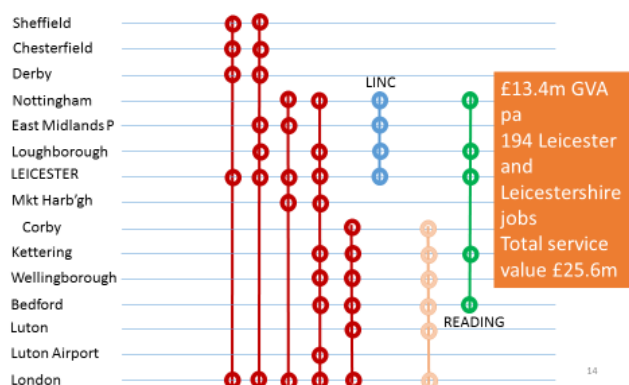
6.0. As previous sections of this strategy have outlined, significant changes to the rail network serving Leicester and Leicestershire and the wider country are proposed. In developing this strategy evidence work has been undertaken to determine the relative importance and impact (priority) of these proposals and to assess the benefits of further potential improvements. This work has used an economic metric of gross value added (G.V.A)<sup>6</sup>.

### 6.1 GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA) MODELLING

6.1.1. Gross Value Added (GVA) modelling has been used to assess the value of the various rail service options identified.

6.1.2. The model used for this analysis combines metrics of economic activity and project growth with train service enhancements based on improvements to generalised journey time (frequency x journey time). Direct train services score much higher than services that require a change of train, because interchange results in a time penalty which may be significant. The model then derives a GVA value for the enhanced business-to-business activity that would be generated by the new services. The model also produces a forecast for the number of additional jobs created, for example:

### Example GVA Tests



**Key:**

Red – existing Midland Main Line services

Blue – local Leicester – Lincoln service

Pink – “6<sup>th</sup> path”

Green – additional service yielding a projected £13.4m GVA p.a.

**Diagram 4 Example GVA tests**

6.1.3. A sample output is shown in the table 1 overleaf for the Leicester to Reading leg of the above. The £13.4m GVA refers to the additional service marked in green on the diagram.

<sup>6</sup> GVA measures the financial contribution to an economy of an individual producer, industry, sector or region. It is important to note that this is not the same as a scheme Benefit Cost Ratio – BCR- which takes into account the costs as well as the transport benefits of a scheme.

## LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY

| Leicester and | Annual £m | GVA | Comment   |
|---------------|-----------|-----|---|
| Kettering     | 0.3       |     | Increased frequency from 1 to 2 trains per hour             |
| Bedford       | 0.3       |     | Increased frequency from 1 to 2 trains per hour             |
| Milton Keynes | 1.1       |     | Journey time 53 mins (current 1h 26 including change)       |
| Bicester      | 0.4       |     | Journey time 1h 5 mins (current 2h 27 including 2 changes)  |
| Oxford        | 4.6       |     | Journey time 1h 18 mins (current 2h 23 including 1 change)  |
| Didcot        | 0.6       |     | Journey time 1h 35 mins (current 2h 44 including 2 changes) |
| Reading       | 2.5       |     | Journey time 1h 49 mins (current 2h 50 including 1 change)  |
| TOTAL         | 9.6       |     |   |

**Table 1 Sample GVA output Leicester to Reading**

### 6.2 GVA STUDY RESULTS

6.2.1. The current pattern of connectivity based on direct train services from Leicester is illustrated below.



6.2.2. While the city and the county derive considerable value from the frequent services to Nottingham, Derby and South Yorkshire, Leicester has relatively poor connectivity compared to cities of equivalent size and importance, and direct links to other major centres can be expected to provide additional economic benefits.

6.2.3. Services to some destinations, such as Leeds, North-East England and Scotland could, subject to spare capacity and rolling stock being available, be provided over the existing rail network. Other links would require upgrading of the network to provide the necessary capacity and capability. In this context, the construction of the new East West Rail route between Bedford and Oxford via Bletchley and Banbury, due to open in stages during Control Periods 5 and 6, will provide a direct route from the East Midlands to the Thames Valley, South Coast and South West England, avoiding the need to change trains en route and offering more competitive journey times. Similar benefits might also be derived from upgrading the Oxford – Leamington – Coventry route, including works at Nuneaton to segregate east-west traffic from the West Coast Main Line, which is currently being considered for implementation in Control Period 6.

6.2.4. The opening of the second phase of High Speed 2 northwards from Birmingham to Leeds, planned in 2033, also offers potential for improving connectivity to and from Leicester in the long-term. The project includes an East Midlands station at Toton, , but the location also offers the opportunity for a direct physical rail connection between HS2 and the Midland Mainline to Leicester to enable classic compatible trains to connect Leicester and Leicestershire with the North such as to Leeds and the North-East with significantly reduced journey times. However, this link does not currently feature in DfT’s plans and is a priority area for further work to strengthen the business case.

6.2.5. The study has identified eleven potential destinations for additional direct services from Leicester, as shown in table 2 below

| <b>Destination</b>   | <b>GVA p.a.</b> |
|--|-----------------|
| <b>Sheffield, Leeds and North East England (direct services via HS2)</b>               | 40.9            |
| <b>Swindon and Bristol (via East West Rail)</b>  | 19.5            |
| <b>Sheffield, Leeds and North East England (via HS2 with change of train at Toton)</b> | 17.4            |
| <b>Thames Valley (via Coventry / Leamington)</b>                                       | 14.9            |
| <b>Thames Valley (via East West Rail)</b>  | 13.4            |
| <b>Manchester</b>  | 9.1             |
| <b>Enhanced service to London</b>  | 6.9             |
| <b>Leeds and North East England (via conventional network)</b>                         | 6.4             |
| <b>Sussex Coast and/or Sevenoaks via Thameslink</b>                                    | 4.0             |
| <b>Norwich</b>   | 1.5             |
| <b>Burton-upon-Trent</b>   | 0.34            |

**Table 2 Potential destinations for direct services from Leicester**

6.2.6. The options offering potential GVA benefits of over £10million per annum are shown in green on diagram 6 below. The remainder, returning a potential GVA of under £10million per annum, are shown in yellow.

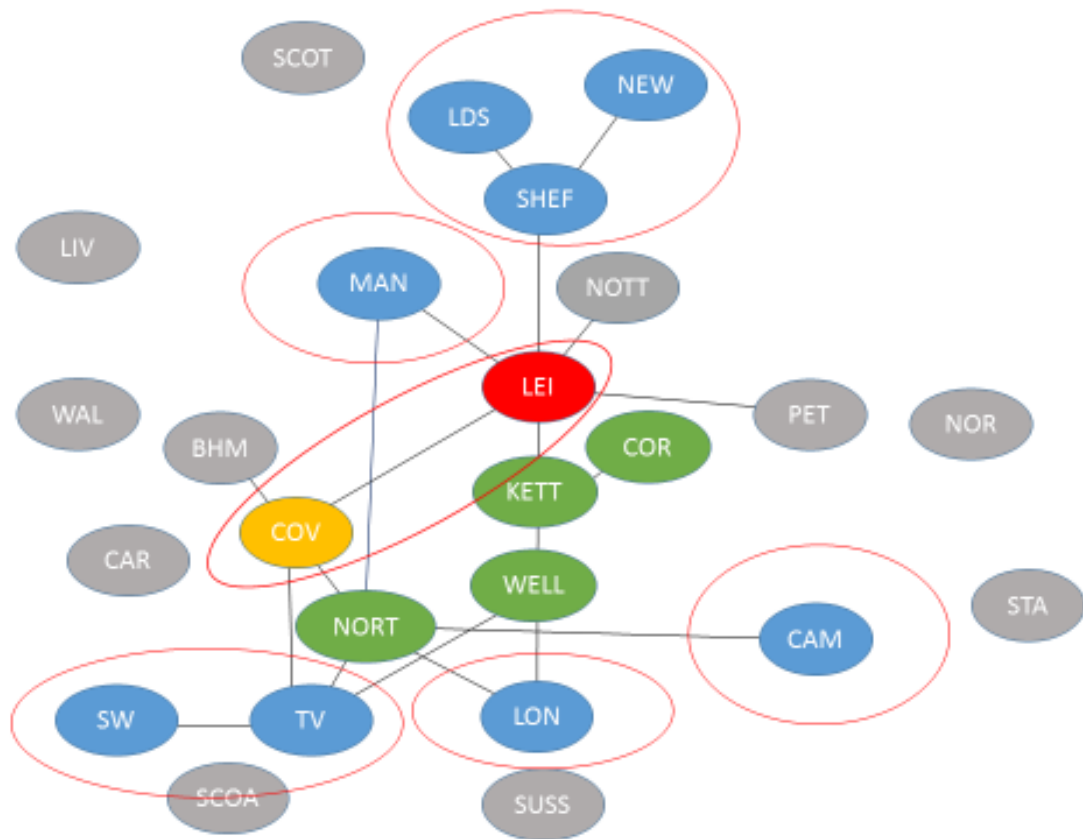


**Key:**  
 Red – direct service  
 Grey – no direct service  
 Green – potential benefits over £10m GVA pa  
 Yellow – potential benefits under £10m GVA pa  
 (green/yellow hashing – depends upon HS2 extension)

**Diagram 6 GVA potential of enhanced rail connectivity**

6.2.7. These conclusions are consistent with similar analysis undertaken in connection with Strategic Economic Plans in Warwickshire, Coventry and Northamptonshire (see diagram 7 overleaf), with the regional investigations conducted by “Midlands Connect” and with the studies being undertaken by Network Rail’s Long-Term Planning Process. There is a particularly high degree of correlation between the various studies in relation to:

- East Midlands to the Thames Valley
- Leicester to Coventry (The “M69 corridor”)
- South and East Midlands and areas included in the “Northern Powerhouse” area



**Key:**

Green – towns covered in Northamptonshire GVA work

Orange – covered in Coventry and Warwickshire GVA work

Blue – common targets for direct and improved services

**Diagram 7 Common targets with Coventry, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire**



## 7. LEICESTER TO LONDON

7.0. A fast, frequent rail service between Leicester and London is vital to the economy of Leicester and Leicestershire. This section of the strategy outlines the priorities for the Leicester to London service and examines the potential effects of HS2 on it.

### 7.1 MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS FROM THE MIDLAND MAIN LINE

7.1.1. The infrastructure enhancements listed in section 5 of this strategy will help contribute towards maximising the benefits to be derived from enhanced services to London.

7.1.2. Particularly key is to maximise the benefits from electrification. Although line speed improvements did not yield the highest Gross Value Added in the study undertaken, this is because the Leicester - London service is already frequent. However, the evident importance of direct links to London led to a need to identify the opportunities for improving the Leicester – London service and secondly, to examine the potential effects of HS2 on the service.

### 7.2 ENHANCED CONVENTIONAL SERVICES

**GVA £6.9m p.a.**

7.2.1. The use of the so-called “sixth path” on the Midland Main Line south of Leicester to provide an additional service to London is an option offering obvious benefits, particularly to Leicester where five trains per hour would be available. The principal competing proposal for the use of the spare path is a second train per hour to Corby; this would not serve Leicester unless extended via Oakham and Melton Mowbray. This option would not offer competitive through journey times and would be of limited direct benefit to the city.

7.2.2. There do not appear to be any insurmountable difficulties associated with introduction of a new London – Leicester service, although, as noted earlier in the strategy, there are significant issues associated with platform capacity at St. Pancras, particularly if the additional service is one that would require the use of long trains of more than 5 vehicles. (For reasons explained elsewhere, platform capacity at St. Pancras does not have a direct bearing on the ability to deliver on the strategy’s priorities.)

7.2.3. The additional London service would be compatible with the proposals for new services to Manchester, Leeds and Burton-upon-Trent, to which the trains could be extended. However, current plans to electrify the Midland Main Line only as far as Sheffield (and the lack of firm plans to electrify the Hope Valley and Leicester – Burton lines) would mean incurring significant expense for further electrification, or the use of diesel or bi-modal (electro-diesel) rolling stock, which might cause operational and logistical difficulties for the train operators.

7.2.4. If only one additional path is available between Leicester and London, then the additional London train would not be compatible with routing Bristol or Thames Valley services via Bedford and East West Rail, and an informed decision about the best use of the spare capacity available would have to be made.

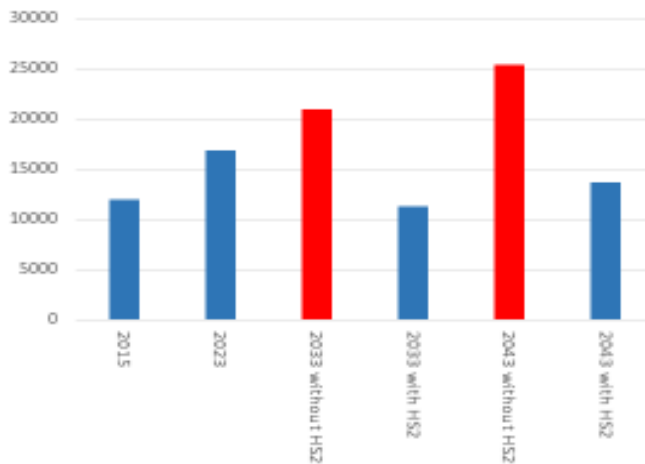
### 7.3 THE EFFECTS OF HS2 ON LEICESTER – LONDON SERVICES

- 7.3.1. Concern has been expressed in Leicester (as in other locations at similar distances from London which will not be directly connected to the High Speed network), that the quality of conventional services will be diluted by the transfer of much of the long-distance market to HS2. It is feared that the market on the conventional network will become more outer-suburban in nature, resulting in more intermediate stops and longer journey times to and from the capital. It has been estimated that each additional call made between Leicester and St. Pancras would adversely affect Leicester's economy by some £4m GVA, or about £1m per minute.
- 7.3.2. Comparisons with France, where the so-called "classic" network has in some areas seen a decline following the expansion of the Lignes à Grande Vitesse, is sometimes cited as evidence of the adverse effect of High Speed networks., It is therefore difficult to accurately predict how HS2 will impact on the existing rail system in Britain. Development of the northern section of HS2 is still at a very early stage and many uncertainties regarding the exact route station locations and timetable, will remain for some time to come. However, the plans and assumptions by government and HS2 Ltd. that underlie the High Speed proposals do enable some conclusions to be surmised.
- 7.3.3. The Department for Transport has a stated objective that "all places (not directly served by HS2) which currently have direct London services will retain a broadly comparable service" after the opening of the high speed network. "Broadly comparable" is not expressly defined, but the intention is clearly that there should be no material diminution in the quality of services to and from London in terms of frequency and journey time. Coventry, which has expressed concerns about the impact of High Speed services from Birmingham on the appeal of the city to potential investors, has already obtained an undertaking to this effect from the Secretary of State, and there is no reason that Leicester should not seek similar assurances.
- 7.3.4. Current industry planning assumes that the growth in demand for rail passenger services seen over the last 15-20 years will continue; this assumption underpins the case for building HS2, which is predicated mainly on the need to provide additional national rail capacity to accommodate growth, rather than the sole objective of securing shorter journey times.
- 7.3.5. Demand for services on the conventional network is expected to continue to grow over the next 20 years. When HS2 is completed in 2033, passengers from Nottingham, Derby and further north are expected to transfer to the new services, freeing capacity from Leicester and further south to accommodate further expansion in demand, as shown in diagram 7 overleaf.



## Passengers Leaving Leicester on London Services (Source: SLC using HS2/NR forecasts)

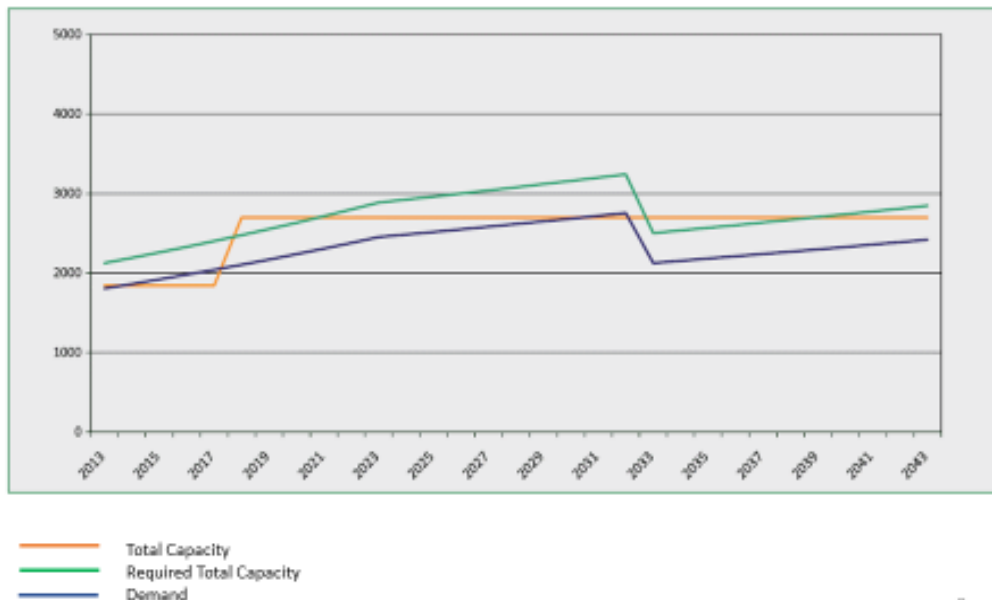
Average passengers per day



Assumptions:  
 Growth to 2023: 40%  
 Growth to 2043: 108%  
 Extrapolated growth to 2033: 74% (NR forecasts assume straight line growth)  
 Abstraction to HS2: 46%

7

## Peak Hour (08.00 to 09.00) Passengers on MML Trains Arriving at St Pancras (Source: Network Rail)



8

Diagram 7 Comparisons of future passenger levels

7.3.6. The projections indicate that the Midland Main Line will be running at or near capacity even after the introduction of the “sixth train” in 2019 until the opening of HS2 in 2033, when some spare capacity will be freed up to accommodate further growth over the following 10 years.

## LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY

However, the nature of the demand from Leicester, for fast, frequent services reaching London in 60 minutes or less, will not change – the advantage brought by HS2 is that trains arriving from further north will have more space to accommodate Leicester passengers.

7.3.7. Non-stop services from Leicester are still likely to be required in order to meet the demand for sub-60 minute journey times, as well as additional services calling at locations further south. The forecast service requirement in 2043 (see diagram 8 below) shows 6 long distance trains per hour between London St. Pancras and Leicester (extended to Nottingham, Derby and Manchester), plus the extension of Thameslink services, providing direct, albeit slower, services to central London and onwards to Sussex and the south coast.

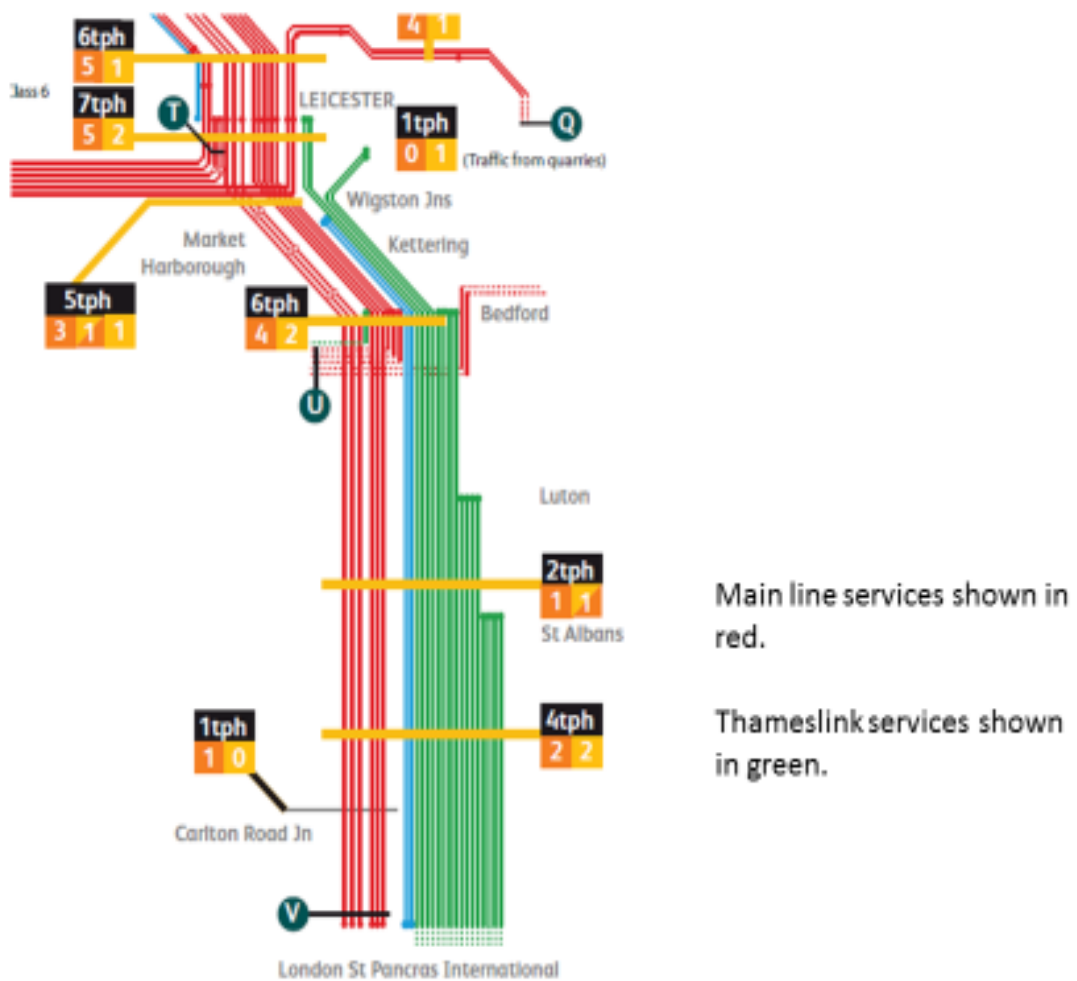


Diagram 8 Estimated train service requirement for 2043 with HS2 (source Network Rail)

## 8. TRAIN SERVICE OPTIONS

8.0. Having considered Leicester to London in section 7 of the strategy, this section outlines options for rail service enhancements to other key destinations elsewhere in the country; further details can be found in appendix 2.

8.1. In some cases, the options are for the provision of new direct services (i.e. at present it is not possible to travel from stations in Leicester and Leicestershire direct to those destination) in other cases it is about improving currently (relatively) poor direct rail connectivity.

### 8.1 TO LEEDS AND NORTH EAST ENGLAND VIA HS2

#### Via interchange at Toton

**GVA £17.4m p.a.**

8.1.1. Although Leicestershire is not served directly by the proposed HS2 route, the proximity of the Toton Interchange offers opportunities to take advantage of the benefits the high-speed line will bring.

8.1.2. Journeys between Leicester and Leeds, York and North East England currently involve a change of train to Cross-Country or local services, at either Derby or Sheffield. Passengers using High Speed services from Toton northwards would save time, although HS2 would only be used for part of the journey, and a change of train would, of course, still be required. Nevertheless, analysis indicates that an estimated GVA of £17.4m p.a. would result.

8.1.3. No regular passenger services from Leicester are currently routed via the proposed interchange station site on the Erewash Valley line, but the base position being examined by Network Rail and HS2 is for a twice hourly shuttle between Leicester, Loughborough and Toton. In addition, however, services to Toton might be provided by diversion of one or more of the three hourly Leicester – Nottingham services. This would require new infrastructure at Toton to allow through running from the south to the east via the new station. However, such infrastructure will also be needed to provide a rail-based fixed link between Toton and Nottingham. One of the half-hourly London – Sheffield trains might also be diverted via the Erewash Valley, with the half-hourly frequency between Leicester and Derby being maintained by means of a new service, perhaps running to Manchester.

#### Direct services

**GVA £40.9m p.a.**

8.1.4. The Government is proposing that the Eastern Arm of HS2 will be routed via the East Midlands Interchange at Toton, sited between Derby and Nottingham. A northbound connection between HS2 and the existing network in the Toton area, which would facilitate through “classic compatible” services to support the growth and prosperity of the East Midlands region.

8.1.5. The highest economic return is assessed as being from a service of two trains per hour – one connecting the southern end of the Midland Main Line with Manchester via the potential Northern Powerhouse Rail, and the other linking the Thames Valley, Midland Main Line and Leeds via the East West Rail line. These services are forecast to deliver £1.9bn of GVA uplift<sup>7</sup> facilitated by an investment of between £60m and £95m in a north facing connection south of Toton between the existing rail network and HS2. The GVA uplift figure is discounted over 60 years for both services; the annual GVA for Reading – Leeds delivers £40.9m GVA p.a. of this.

8.1.6. These proposed services would replace the 2 train per hour shuttle service between Leicester and East Midlands Interchange and the service between Reading and Nottingham, both of which are proposed in Network Rail’s East Midlands Route Study. There is a cost saving associated with some of the infrastructure works at Leicester in terms of the bay platform, which would no longer be required.

8.1.7. It is estimated that approximately 800 passengers per day from Leicester and Loughborough might use through services to the North-East via HS2, but this would not be sufficient to underwrite the costs involved, and the wider benefits gained from other locations along the lines of route (the so-called “String of Pearls” effect) would need to be added to make a sound case for investment to the Government and HS2 Ltd. Studies would need to include an understanding of the pattern of services required to exploit the potential market, how that pattern fits with both the proposed HS2 and Midland Main Line timetables, the availability of the necessary capacity on the wider conventional and high speed networks, and any technical issues that may arise relating to the design and operation of the rolling stock.

8.1.8. Table 3 illustrates the potential GVA value of new services accessing HS2 via Toton in £m discounted over 60 years. The strongest cases are illustrated in green.

| <b>£m GVA</b>     | <b>Leeds</b> | <b>York</b> | <b>Sheffield &amp; Manchester</b> |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Nottingham</b> | 70           | 30          | 349                               |
| <b>Derby</b>      | 64           | 26          | 332                               |
| <b>St Pancras</b> | 642          | 148         | 1,051                             |
| <b>Reading</b>    | 873          | 217         | n/a                               |

**Table 3 Potential GVA values**

8.1.9. These GVA uplifts result from the transformation of journey time from these proposed new services across a whole range of origins and destinations connecting cities and towns throughout the East Midlands, South Midlands and Thames Valley with destinations in the North West and North East. Most of these links would be around one hour faster than is achievable by current rail services or by existing car journeys.

<sup>7</sup> Discounted over 60 years from proposed opening in 2033

### 8.2 TO SWINDON AND BRISTOL

**GVA £19.5m p.a.**

8.2.1. Services to Swindon and Bristol (and possibly onwards to the West Country) would be routed via the Midland Main Line, East West Rail Western section and the Great Western Main Line, potentially serving:

- Bedford
- Bletchley
- Bicester
- Oxford
- Didcot
- Swindon
- Bath
- Bristol

8.2.2. Clearly, completion of the East West Rail “Western Section” throughout between Oxford and Bedford, currently planned for the end of CP6 in 2024, is a prerequisite for introduction of these services.

8.2.3. Capacity issues would also affect the Midland Main Line between Kettering and Bedford, where informed opinion states that only one additional main-line path is available (although accurately determining railway capacity, dependent as it is on several variable parameters including track layout, signalling design, line speeds, rolling stock performance, stopping patterns etc. is notoriously difficult). However, many spare paths are actually available and there will be competing views on their best uses.

8.2.4. There are also separate issues regarding capacity at Oxford (which would, at least to some extent), be addressed in the large-scale redevelopment at Oxford station proposed in Control Period 6 and beyond, and on the Great Western Main Line both between Oxford and Didcot and westwards to Swindon. A stop at Didcot could be achieved with the current station layout at the expense of a time-consuming reversal, or new platforms would be required on the west curve connecting the Oxford route with the Main Line towards the west.

8.2.5. Electrification throughout between the East Midlands and Bristol would be desirable, though not necessarily essential, and in fact current plans would deliver the works required, though not necessarily to a common timescale.

### 8.3 TO THE THAMES VALLEY

**GVA (via Coventry and Leamington) £14.9m p.a.**

**GVA (via East West Rail) £13.4m p.a.**

8.3.1. Direct services to Reading could be routed via Coventry (which would also provide service enhancements to South Wigston, Narborough and Hinckley) or East West Rail, potentially serving:

1. Via Coventry:
    - Nuneaton
    - Coventry
    - Leamington Spa
    - Banbury
    - Oxford
    - Didcot
    - Reading
  
  2. Via East West Rail:
    - Bedford
    - Bletchley
    - Bicester
    - Oxford
    - Didcot
    - Reading
- 8.3.2. Capacity between Leicester and Nuneaton is probably sufficient to accommodate an hourly interval service, but crossing the West Coast Main Line at Nuneaton would be a major problem, and would probably require construction of a segregated route directly connecting the Leicester and Coventry lines via an underpass, which would preclude a stop at Nuneaton. In any case, if Nuneaton was to be served, reversal in the station would be necessary.
- 8.3.3. Similar issues arise at Coventry, where very limited capacity is available on the Birmingham Main Line to allow trains to cross between the Nuneaton and Leamington routes on the level. It is unlikely that space could be found to provide a grade-separated connection between these routes without major engineering works involving significant amounts of land take.
- 8.3.4. As it is unlikely that the DfT or the cross-country operator would contemplate diverting South Coast – Manchester services back on to the Warwick route to Birmingham to release capacity, further double-tracking of the Coventry – Leamington route would be required in addition to the works now being undertaken to facilitate an increase in cross-country train paths.
- 8.3.5. Informed opinion holds that the “Cherwell Valley” route between Leamington and Didcot is currently operating at or near full capacity, largely due to its use as a major freight artery between the South Coast and West Midlands. Opening of the East West Rail Western Section will provide an alternative route for freight which might release capacity on the Cherwell Valley, but again, there will be competing demands for the spare paths.
- 8.3.6. Routing the Thames Valley services via East West Rail results in a slightly lower GVA, and is subject to the same comments and provisos as detailed above in section 8.2, except that a call at Didcot could be accommodated on the existing infrastructure. However, it can reasonably be expected that some capacity would be available on the four-track section east

of Didcot, particularly following completion of the recent major works in and around Reading.

- 8.3.7. Although Reading itself is a significant revenue-generating destination, completion of the “Western Link” into Heathrow Airport from the Great Western Main Line at Langley, currently planned in 2021, would offer the possibility of extending services directly into the airport. However, it is not yet clear whether the new route, which was originally conceived as a purely local link accommodating services to and from Reading only, will be suitable to accommodate long-distance trains. If, in fact, the specification for the works do permit such use, there would clearly be fierce competition for the best use of the link, with many different UK regions having expressed interest in direct services.

### 8.4 TO MANCHESTER

**GVA £9.1m p.a.**

- 8.4.1. Although Nottingham enjoys regular services to Manchester via Chesterfield and Sheffield, the remainder of the East Midlands including Leicester and Derby lost their direct links with the virtual withdrawal of services between London St. Pancras and Manchester following completion of the West Coast electrification from Euston in 1966-7. The direct main line between Matlock and Chinley via Bakewell closed in 1968, leaving the (very) few remaining through services running via the longer Hope Valley route until they were finally withdrawn in the early 1980s.

- 8.4.2. Given the size of the populations at both ends of this route, the economic importance of both Leicester and Manchester, and the relatively poor quality of road links compared to, say, the M1 corridor, it can be reasonably expected that there is a suppressed rail market that could be unlocked by the introduction of direct services.

- 8.4.3. Trains could be routed directly via the south junction at Dore and the Hope Valley route, which was used during the temporary “Project Rio” services operated during the West Coast Route modernisation project. Alternatively, they could reverse at Sheffield, at the cost of a time penalty, but providing access to a larger market. The service could serve:

- Loughborough
- East Midlands Parkway
- Derby
- Sheffield (with reversal and time penalty)
- Stockport
- Manchester Piccadilly

- 8.4.4. Capacity on the Hope Valley is at a premium following frequency improvements in recent years, and the continuing heavy freight traffic from the quarries at Buxton and the cement works at Hope. However, capacity improvements are planned under the “Northern Hub” project in Control Period 5, which should ease the situation. Options for providing the service include a new dedicated Leicester – Manchester service, or use of the sixth path on the Midland Main Line to provide through trains from London.

8.4.5. A more radical solution, to secure faster and more competitive journey times, would be reopening of the closed former main line from Matlock through Bakewell to Chinley, where the present main line from Sheffield to Stockport would be joined. Reopening has been considered a number of times since the route was closed in 1968, and at one time it was included in Derbyshire's long-term transport plan. However, while previous studies indicate that reopening is technically feasible, the work would be very expensive and would be likely to attract opposition given the line's position in the heart of the national park, and the use of large parts as a cycle and foot path in which substantial sums have already been invested. It is not considered that this is a realistic option, particularly if based solely on the benefits of an East Midlands – Manchester passenger service. However, in the long-term, it is, perhaps, possible a case might be made based on the line's contribution to a much wider national strategy for improving passenger and freight connectivity and capacity.

### 8.5 TO LEEDS AND NORTH EAST ENGLAND VIA CONVENTIONAL NETWORK

**GVA £6.4m p.a.**

8.5.1. The potential for through services to Leeds and the North East has been discussed previously in the context of HS2, and much the same conclusions apply to services routed via the existing conventional network. However, due to the extended journey times, the GVA is substantially reduced compared with routing via the high-speed line.

8.5.2. Extension of one of the existing hourly London – Sheffield services to Leeds is an obvious solution, albeit at the cost of additional train sets. Alternatively, subject to the comments above regarding extension of electrification, the additional London service or one of the new Bristol / Thames Valley trains might be extended to Leeds or through to the North East.

8.5.3. The value of these services would clearly be affected once journeys via the high-speed network became available following the opening of HS2 in 2033. Any prior introduction of through services to the North East would need to consider the risk that they could have a limited life of perhaps 10-15 years, although demand could be built up during this period, forming a proven customer base upon which to build further growth once HS2 was open.

### 8.6 TO THE SUSSEX COAST AND/OR SEVENOAKS VIA THAMESLINK

**GVA £4.0m p.a.**

8.6.1. Another potential use for any additional spare capacity on the Midland Main Line could be extension of Thameslink services to Leicester to provide through cross-London links to Gatwick Airport and Brighton, or to Sevenoaks. This would also give Leicester a fifth train to London per hour, with some potential advantages to passengers travelling to the City (Farringdon, Blackfriars or London Bridge) who would be saved a change onto London Underground or Thameslink on arrival.

8.6.2. The main objections to this proposal centre on the extended journey time compared to an "Inter City" type operation, and the use of suburban rolling stock which is often perceived as inferior to the existing or next-generation long-distance trains. It is very unlikely that the



future Thameslink operator would contemplate the use of dedicated low-density stock specifically for services north of Bedford to Leicester and Corby, particularly in view of the intense utilisation of the Thameslink fleet that is required to make the operation viable.

8.6.3. However, Network Rail's projected train service pattern for 2043 (see Section 7.3 above) does include provision for one Thameslink service per hour to Leicester and one per hour to Corby. While journey times from Leicester and Market Harborough are unlikely to be competitive compared to the fast services to St. Pancras, some passengers travelling to destinations in Sussex and Kent might be attracted by the avoidance of the need to cross between London termini.

### 8.7 TO NORWICH

**GVA £1.5m p.a.**

8.7.1. An additional service from Birmingham to Norwich via Leicester and Peterborough would be relatively straightforward to implement, albeit at the expense of additional rolling stock. Assuming that the existing hourly Birmingham – Leicester local service 1 (via Hinckley, Narborough and South Wigston) remained, the extra train would provide a third Birmingham – Leicester service per hour as well as increasing frequency at Melton Mowbray and Oakham to half-hourly.

8.7.2. Extension of the local Birmingham – Leicester service to Norwich (or diversion of the existing Stansted Airport service and extension of the local train to Stansted in substitution) would reduce the need for additional stock, but would result in one or other of these long-distance services having additional stops and longer journey times compared to the existing fast service. Whichever way it might be provided, capacity between Leicester, Nuneaton and Birmingham would not seem to be an issue, although platforms at Birmingham New Street are already at something of a premium.

### 8.8 TO BURTON-UPON-TRENT

**GVA £0.34m p.a.**

8.8.1. Passenger services between Leicester and Burton-on-Trent were withdrawn on 7 September 1964, since when the line has been maintained and operated as a freight route. Closure of the collieries along the line, and the subsequent decommissioning of Drakelow Power Station in March 2003, resulted in the cessation of coal traffic, leaving only the flow of aggregates from Bardon Hill and Stud Farm Quarries. As most of this traffic passes via Knighton and the Midland Main Line, the section between Bardon Hill and Burton-on-Trent is now relatively lightly used.

8.8.2. The route has long been subject to significant problems associated with subsidence, which has resulted in the imposition of numerous Temporary Speed Restrictions (TSRs) and the need for frequent remedial work to the track. Some years ago, in order to enable a less onerous maintenance regime to be implemented, the maximum permissible speed was reduced to 45mph, but about 4¾ miles is currently permanently restricted to no more than 20mph. In

addition, the “Up” (or eastbound) line is restricted to 25mph over about 2 miles between Castle Gresley and Hicks Lodge, while the adjacent “Down” (Westbound) line remains at 45mph, due to embankment subsidence on one side of the formation.

- 8.8.3. These low speeds would be inappropriate for a passenger service as they would result in long and therefore uncompetitive journey times. While the geometry of the track remains suitable for higher speeds up to 60mph, and probably more on certain sections, significant remedial work would be required to counteract the effects of existing subsidence and ensure the long-term stability of the underlying formation before maximum speeds could be safely raised. If such works were not carried out, significant risks of temporary speed restrictions would remain, resulting in unreliable services which would not be attractive to passengers.
- 8.8.4. Although the current maintenance regime is appropriate to the heavy, but low-speed, traffic now carried, it is also likely that significant track renewal would be required, as it has not been maintained to the full standards suitable for higher speeds for many years.
- 8.8.5. Signalling on the route consists of traditional mechanical equipment controlled from three manual signal boxes at Bardon Hill, Mantle Lane and Moira West. Although perfectly suitable for passenger operation, the long block sections between the signal boxes restrict capacity, and additional signalling would be required to reliably accommodate a frequent, regular-interval passenger service in addition to the current freight flows. As noted in section 5.2 above, opening of the planned East Midlands Gateway freight terminal might result in increased use of the Leicester – Burton route for intermodal trains, which would also require additional capacity. To ensure long-term viability, comprehensive resignalling controlled from the East Midlands Signalling Centre would need to be seriously considered.
- 8.8.6. Eleven level crossings have been identified (previous experience elsewhere indicates that there are probably also other rights of way which have fallen into disuse or otherwise been overlooked), all of which will require risk assessment to determine the safety implications of increased line speeds. Depending on the outcome of these investigations, remedial work to eliminate the crossings or upgrade them to higher safety standards would almost certainly be required. Under current rules, all infrastructure, including earthworks and structures, will need to be assessed to ensure compatibility with standards for higher speed, which may also result in the need for additional remedial work, for example, increasing clearances through overbridges.
- 8.8.7. The removal of the east-to-north connection at Knighton Junction many years ago severed the direct link to and from Leicester station. The former alignment has been sold and extensively redeveloped, meaning reinstatement would be very expensive. New legal powers would also be required through the Transport & Works Act or Development Consent Order process. The alternative of reversing trains at Knighton South would not only further extend journey times, but would require additional infrastructure, with new legal powers if construction was required outside the current Limits of Deviation.

8.8.8. In summary, the reinstatement of passenger services between Leicester and Burton is technically feasible, but, in view of the current status and condition of the route, further investigative work will be required, including

- Detailed ground condition surveys to determine the extent of remedial works likely to be needed to stabilise the formation
- Other surveys to establish the suitability of the infrastructure to reliably accommodate the more intensive service levels
- A better definition of the market to be served and a clear understanding of the type of service required to exploit it (e.g. how many stations at what locations, minimum journey times required, origin and destination etc.)

8.8.9. However, at this time any further work on the reopening of the Leicester – Burton line is in abeyance. This situation will be kept under review in the light of future growth in the Coalville area, i.e. beyond current planned levels. Further, should freight-based improvements to the line take place at some point in the future there may be a more feasible case for the reintroduction of passenger services. For example, it *might* prove necessary to upgrade the line to aid the supply of materials required to construct HS2. Where this to be the case, it might be potentially possible to seek to incorporate the operation of passenger services into a future rail franchise. It is important to emphasise that there are no such proposals at this time, however.

### 8.9 TO COVENTRY VIA NUNEATON (LE-NUCKLE)

8.9.1. Work already carried out for the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (“Strategic Rail Priorities” and “Project Pipeline”) has identified the strong need for a viable link between Nuneaton and the East Midlands. This is also supported by Midlands Connect.

8.9.2. The key infrastructure requirement to deliver the local service requirement (a service between Coventry and Nottingham stopping at local stations to Leicester) will be a means of crossing the West Coast Main Line at Nuneaton. The CWLEP and LLEP are sponsoring the development of a project to provide a flyunder from the west side of Nuneaton station to the Leicester line, as shown in diagram 9.

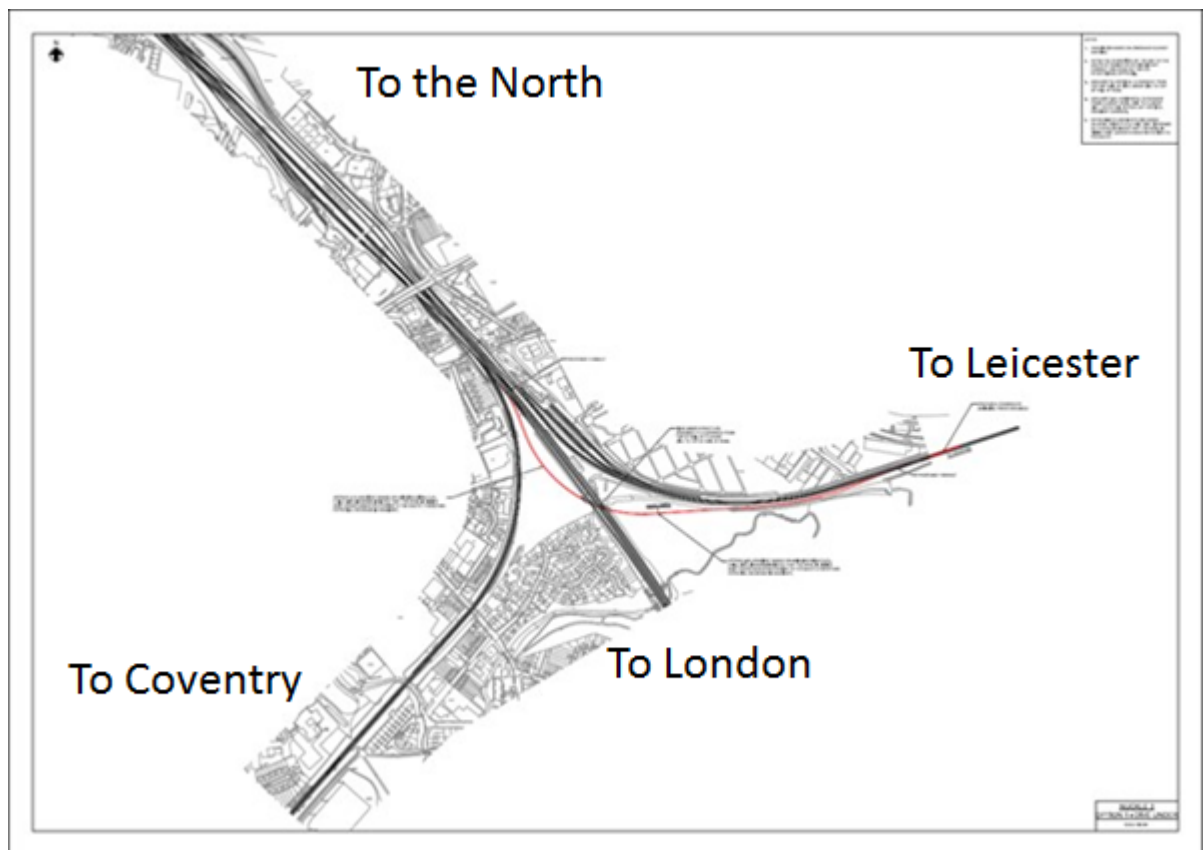


Diagram 9 Propose 'flyunder' at Nuneaton

8.9.3. This project will facilitate links between Leicester and Nuneaton, with the following benefits:

- Improving post-HS2 connections to both London and Birmingham, and access to the Birmingham Interchange, particularly for residents of south-west Leicestershire
- Responding to population growth along the corridor between Leicester and Coventry, and providing existing residents and business in South Wigston, Narborough and Hinckley with enhanced rail services
- Providing sustainable support to employment development in Leicester, Nuneaton and Coventry
- Adding value to the economic benefits to the Corridor being provided via new stations opened in 2016 at Bermuda Park and Coventry Arena, the 2 trains per hour service to be implemented in 2018 between Nuneaton and Coventry and the new Kenilworth Station due to open in 2017.

8.9.4. The project is estimated to deliver a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR), taking account of financial, economic and environmental benefits, calculated over the DfT's 60-year required appraisal period, of 3.07 i.e. £3.07 return for every £1.00 invested, representing "High Value for Money" on DfT criteria.



## 9. SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

9.0. Effective rail connectivity is vital to Leicester and Leicestershire's economy. Rail enables people to get to and from work; visitors to come and enjoy the area's attractions; and enables the movement of freight and goods.

9.1. Recognise this importance, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership have jointly commissioned SLC Rail Ltd to prepare this strategy to identify the rail priorities for the area (those that are particularly key to supporting economic growth) and outline actions that need to be taken to deliver on them.

### 9.1 LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL PRIORITIES

9.1.1. Based on the analysis carried out for and presented in this strategy, and also reflecting feedback from consultations with key stakeholders and residents of Leicester and Leicestershire, five key rail priorities have been identified:

- i. **To maximise the benefit from the Midland Main Line services.** Maximising the benefits means:
  - Pressing for completion of electrification with the minimum of further delay
  - Ensuring that rolling stock on the Midland Mainline is replaced by new intercity standard rolling stock of appropriate quality and performance, particularly for the electric services, including the use of bi-mode trains. Using the opportunity from the later implementation of electrification to put in at the same time the capacity needed for Leicester and Leicestershire's long term growth as a part of the project. (This includes work identified already by Network Rail to support rail services in the longer term, including 4-tracking between Syston and Wigston, additional platforms at Leicester, and grade separation of North-South and East-West traffic flows through the Leicester area.)
  - Securing the journey time improvements to achieve a sub-60 minute journey time between Leicester and London on non-stop services, including the straightening of the tracks through Market Harborough Station (We would also wish to see the prompt completion of the works to lengthen the platforms and to improve to the station's accessibility.)
  - Ensuring that new intercity rolling stock of appropriate quality and performance is procured for the electric services. Ensuring there is capacity for strategic freight services in support of the region's logistics industry
- ii. **To achieve the best result from the implementation of HS2 Phase 2.** The proposed route will run through the north-western part of Leicestershire, with the nearest stations being Birmingham Interchange (near the NEC) and East Midlands Interchange at Toton. The delivery of this project will result in fast services from Sheffield and the Nottingham/Derby area to London and the North. Achieving the best result means:

- Ensuring that the perceived risk of lengthening journey times between Leicestershire stations and London does not occur. The risk arises because existing Midland Main Line trains are projected to lose nearly half of their passengers to HS2. However, forecast growth in passengers will mean that existing levels of demand will be exceeded even with HS2. Nevertheless, Leicester and Leicestershire should seek assurances from the Secretary of State that Leicester's fast services will be protected.
- Securing through "classic compatible" direct services from Leicester to destinations in the north via HS2. The journey time reductions available are substantial (up to an hour on many station pairings). It is recognised that Leicester and Leicestershire in themselves may not justify a strong business case for these services, but if services are provided through Leicester from key economic development areas in the South Midlands and Thames Valley, the proposition is substantially strengthened, especially if an alliance with other LEPs and Local Authorities can be achieved, including with Transport for the North, creating a "string of pearls".

**iii. To improve radically direct fast connectivity to key regional and national destinations.**

As noted, Leicester and Leicestershire have poor rail connectivity. A model has been used to test the potential GVA uplift that could be achieved through new and enhanced services. This was used to identify priorities for development. Using this prioritisation, radically improving connectivity means:

- Faster journeys to London and Birmingham
- New direct services to Coventry (which would help to deliver more frequent services to South Wigston, Narborough and Hinckley), the Thames Valley, Manchester and West Yorkshire
- Reduced east-west journey times and increase in frequency to two trains per hour with earlier start times to Stansted Airport (seeking to avoid adversely affecting services to stations along the route, e.g. Melton Mowbray Oakham)

Improving local rail connectivity for residents and businesses in the south west of the county to destinations in the West Midlands would also help to provide improved access to longer distance services on the West Coast Main Line and the HS2 western leg.

**vi. To ensure that rail access and economic development are planned together.** All nine Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are undertaking work on a Strategic Growth Plan. This will seek to identify where future growth will be accommodated and what infrastructure is required to support it. As rail continues to play an increasingly important role, access to the rail network will become correspondingly more important. Existing rail car parks will become full, and cannot be expanded for ever. Ensuring joined-up planning means:

- Better spatial and transport planning around stations, and some intervention to increase railway car parking within the limits imposed by the siting of the stations.
- Planning new development with access to the rail network as a key consideration.

- Identifying potential new strategic access points to the rail network. This could involve long term consideration of “Parkway” sites<sup>8</sup>.

**vii. To support modal shift from cars and lorries to sustainable transport.** Local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire are seeking to promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to the private car and are fully supportive of initiatives to transfer freight from road to rail. This strategy supports modal shift where possible and helps to support the transfer of freight from road to rail.

The Carbon Reduction Strategy for Leicestershire (2013-2020) outlines the need to reduce the county’s carbon footprint overall. The specific measures relevant to this document are:

- Rail electrification (including HS2)
- Shifting demand from one mode to another (increase in the number of short trips made by walking and cycling; increase in mode share for bus and rail trips; shift from road freight to rail freight).

Supporting modal shift from cars and lorries to sustainable transport means:

- Working with Network Rail and other partners to seek to improve access to/facilities at railway stations for those arriving by public transport, bike or on foot.
- Encouraging operators to provide/expand the provision of integrated ticketing between rail and bus services.
- Working through the planning process to seek to identify potential rail-based opportunities to help to meet Leicester and Leicestershire’s housing and economic growth needs and aspirations<sup>9</sup> - where increased rail freight traffic might lead to the potential need for increased level crossing closures, the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire would wish to work with Network Rail to identify solutions that minimise impacts on the local road network and the local economy and potential for growth.

9.1.2. In seeking to deliver these priorities the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire will (as appropriate) seek to work with authorities elsewhere in the country to achieve rail projects that provide mutual benefits and that, so far possible, avoid any (unintentional) adverse implications.

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<sup>8</sup> While it may not be possible to *significantly* increase the number of railway stations in the county, access to the railway itself can be improved. Many of the measures in this strategy seek to support this aim.

<sup>9</sup> For example through work to develop the Strategic Growth Plan.



**9.2 DELIVERING THE PRIORITIES**

9.2.1. Most of the developments outlined in this strategy will require Leicester and Leicestershire to act in a facilitating and lobbying role, rather than as direct funder or promoter of schemes. Partnerships are vital for making long term development happen, and require Leicester and Leicestershire to bring together for each project the support of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and devolved bodies, HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and the Department for Transport. **Leicester and Leicestershire stakeholders need to be active in political lobbying and rail industry development work.**

9.2.2. An initial, outline action plan is shown overleaf. It is important to note that these are high level actions, which will consist of a number of steps which will take place overtime; some of the initial next steps are outlined in the next section. Further, the plan will ‘live’, continuing to evolve and develop in response to circumstances and any new opportunities that are presented. The strategy will be periodically reviewed to ensure that it remains relevant and of maximum use to the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire in seeking to secure investment in rail infrastructure and services serving the area and connecting it to other key destinations around the country.

| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Actions by Leicester, LLEP &amp; Leicestershire</b>   | <b>Funding</b>                                   | <b>Potential Date</b>   |
|--|--|--|---|
| MML Improvements, including line speed and capacity improvements; modern, appropriate quality rolling stock (pre and post electrification); electrification, | To achieve at the earliest opportunity sub-60 minute journey time Leicester to London with high quality rolling stock through prompt completion of line speed improvements, capacity works and electrification   | CP5/6 delivery plan                              | 2023, but key elements before   |
| HS2  | Seek assurance from Government based on evidence for no reduction in Leicester to London service. Undertake further joint work to enforce benefits of northbound classic compatible services. Continue to lobby for a physical link between HS2 and the Midland Mainline in the area of the new East Midlands Hub station to enable improved connectivity with HS2 for residents across Leicester and Leicestershire | National   | Phase 2 Hybrid Bill<br>TBC<br><br>Services operational<br>2033 and beyond |
| New service to Coventry  | Joint venture by CWLEP and LLEP. Join in project (Nuckle 3.1). Requires £53m investment at Nuneaton. Funding assembly is key.  | Growth funding bid through Midlands Connect/LEPs | 2019  |

|   |  |   |      |
|---|--|---|------|
| New service to Manchester                             | Key is alliance with Transport for the North to present case to DfT. Need to include in specification for new EMT franchise. Key constraint is Hope Valley | CP6 delivery of Hope Valley works.<br>Inclusion in EMT re-franchising spec.   | 2020 |
| Birmingham and Stansted journey times and frequencies | Project being led by Midlands Connect. Active involvement for lobbying.  | CP6 delivery plan   | 2022 |
| New service to Thames Valley                          | Led by DfT. East West Rail project being delivered, but Bletchley-Bedford section will be in CP6. Key is presentation of investment case to DfT and NR.    | Completion of CP5 works Oxford-Bletchley. Inclusion Bletchley-Bedford in CP6. | 2022 |
| New service to Leeds                                  | As per Manchester. Key constraint is north of Sheffield.   | Inclusion of works north of Sheffield in CP6                                  | 2024 |

### 9.3 INITIAL NEXT STEPS

9.3.1. This section of the strategy outlines some of the initial steps that have been identified to take forward the delivery of Leicester and Leicestershire rail priorities. The list is not exhaustive and the authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire will remain alert to any changes in circumstances and any new opportunities that might arise, and will respond accordingly.

#### INITIAL LOBBYING AND OPPORTUNITIES TO INFLUENCE

9.3.2. The investment that will be required to improve and expand the network to facilitate the introduction of new services is of benefit not just to Leicestershire, but also to the country as a whole. Evidence-based lobbying of Central Government with the objective of restarting paused projects such as Midland Main Line electrification, and to make the case for including projects currently being considered in the settlements for CP6 and beyond, will be essential if the necessary enhancements are to be delivered. It is important to ensure that there is compatibility and commonality of purpose between the various authorities and their strategic plans, so that a clear and compelling case is made to Central Government supporting the proposals and demonstrating the strategic benefits to be derived from them.

9.3.3. Steps to be taken to start the process include:

- Influencing the East Midlands Franchise specification. Discussions with Network Rail and the Department for Transport regarding the conclusions from the various strategic plans, the priorities identified by the authorities and the practicalities involved in developing and implementing the necessary enhancements required to deliver them.
- Lobbying for better connectivity with HS2.

9.3.4. 11.2 In these respects, there are several key milestones over the next twelve months which offer opportunities to influence Government and Network Rail decisions:

### EAST MIDLANDS INVITATION TO TENDER (ITT)

9.3.5. The East Midlands Trains refranchising has begun. It is likely that a detailed response will be needed to the East Midlands ITT, and a bidders' prospectus has already been uploaded on the DfT website. Whilst work is continuing on this it will be vital that authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire take opportunities to press for:

- The Government to commit to a timetable for completion of the Midland Main Line (MML) electrification through Leicester and Leicestershire, and beyond northwards.
- The prompt completion of MML line-speed and capacity improvements, including at Market Harborough Station and in and around Leicester.
- The provision of modern passenger rolling stock with high performance and acceleration in the period prior to electrification, including the use of bi-mode trains.
- Direct service to **Manchester** - There are two options available; to split the Liverpool-Norwich train at Nottingham, with one section of this covering stops to Sheffield, Liverpool and Manchester. However, this solution would provide a slow journey time, and the favoured option would be to run an additional service from Leicester to Manchester.
- Services to the **Thames Valley** – and with it the opportunity to construct the “string of pearls” that will assist with securing the northbound classic link at Toton.
- Service to **Coventry** – with the potential for improving the links between Coventry and Leicester (and intermediate stations), and ongoing benefits to Leicester in the post-HS2 environment
- Direct services linking Leicester and Leeds by extending services along the Midland Mainline beyond Sheffield.

### HINCKLEY AND SOUTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE

9.3.6. The West Coast Main Line ITT document is more pertinent to the south west of the county; towns such as Hinckley look to this line as their principal connection to the railway. Currently there is only 1tph stopping at both Hinckley and Narborough stations, but it is unlikely that Cross Country trains would want to significantly increase journey times by adding two station stops. It is clear that a new service would benefit the area more.

9.3.7. As already discussed above, there is a need to be able to access Nuneaton, both to connect with the network as it stands to gain the benefits from developments such as LE-NUCKLE 3.1 and the future infrastructure work which will enable the West Coast Main Line to be crossed via the construction of the flyunder here.

9.3.8. Following the opening of HS2 Phase 1, there will be extensive restructuring of the southern end of the West Coast Main Line. This will provide better connectivity to towns such as Nuneaton. Residents will also gain better access to southwards access to London and the Home Counties, and northwards access to Manchester. Further work will need to be

undertaken to determine whether long-distance or local travel is the top priority, and this will need to be reflected in any future revisions of this strategy.

### CONNECTIVITY WITH HS2

#### TOTON

9.3.9. The work undertaken on the feasibility of a northbound connection with HS2 has already been described above. HS2 Ltd.'s current thinking is to provide shuttle services to and from the new interchange from Derby, Nottingham and Leicester.

9.3.10. However, based on the work undertaken to develop this strategy, the alternative view is that the shuttles, particularly for Leicester, are not a good idea strategically; a service between either Leicester and Manchester or Leicester and Leeds, using the same slots as those reserved for the far shorter trip, will deliver a much higher benefit than a 2tph shuttle service between Leicester and Toton. The best gain to the county is a classic compatible service and further work is required to help deliver this.

9.3.11. The authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire will continue to seek to work with HS2 Ltd. as it develops proposals for the HS2 Eastern Leg (HS2 Phase 2b), following publication of the revised route in November 2016. It will be important to ensure that not only is HS2's maximum economic potential realised, but also that its environmental impacts on north west Leicestershire are minimised.

#### BIRMINGHAM

9.3.12. An issue for residents wanting to travel on HS2 from Birmingham Interchange is that Leicestershire trains currently stop at Birmingham New Street, which is full. Also, this is not the nearest station to the new lines, necessitating a transfer which will cost valuable minutes of travelling time.

9.3.13. One option being considered by Midlands Connect is to be able to move an additional 10 tph into central Birmingham by the creation of a Midlands Hub with new infrastructure known as the Bordesley Chord.

9.3.14. Large flyovers near the St Andrew's Stadium in Bordesley will link the lines from Leicester and Derby into Moor Street Station, and the line from King's Norton and Moseley to Bordesley, enabling trains from the West Country to also go to Moor Street. There is space at this station for 2 extra terminus platforms, and once built, this would make it possible to run circa 8tph from here.

9.3.15. One of the possible choices for Network Rail and train operators would be for East Midlands Trains to be diverted to Moor Street. For LCC's purposes, the important issue is that Moor Street will be next door to the Birmingham Interchange, giving a much quicker transfer to HS2 for passengers from either Hinckley or Narborough.

9.3.16. However, these advantages are not balanced across the county; travellers from Leicester wanting to change on to another service leaving New Street will have a longer journey to make their connection. Further work is recommended to determine the best choices for Leicestershire going forward.

### STANSTED SERVICE

9.3.17. To work with franchise operators to ensure appropriate improvements to the Stansted service for Leicestershire residents, but with no reduction to service stops at Melton Mowbray and Oakham. It is an aspiration of the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy to ensure that neighbouring counties are also beneficiaries to improvements made here, and it may be advantageous to liaise directly with Peterborough and Cambridge on the Stansted service to ensure the best outcomes for the county.



## 10.GLOSSARY

## 11. APPENDIX 1 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

AP1.1. In developing this strategy, the following has been undertaken::

- Engaged with Network Rail's long term planning process
- Held discussions with other industry parties including the DfT and East Midlands Trains
- Supported the work of Midlands Connect (MC) which has been looking on a corridor basis at the transport needs across the East and West Midlands
- Analysis of the adequacy of the rail network to support LEP's requirements
- Specified various potential train service options and commissioned GVA analysis of their potential to support economic growth

AP1.2. The study included the following stages:

- Research including review of documentation
- Industry engagement, including discussions and correspondence with relevant contacts in Network Rail and the Department for Transport
- Formulating options
- GVA analysis (see below)
- Capacity analysis
- Development of Strategy
- Alignment with other Local Authority and LEP studies

AP1.3. Background research has been undertaken using, *inter alia*, the following documents:

- Network Rail East Midlands Strategic Business Plan for CP5
- Network Rail Enhancements Delivery Plan for CP5
- Network Rail East Midlands Route Study 2015/2016
- Network Rail Yorkshire and Humberside Route Utilisation Strategy 2009
- Network Rail Freight Route Utilisation Strategy 2007
- Network Rail Network Specifications East Midlands ("Meeting the Demand for Rail"), 2012
- ATOC Rolling Stock Requirements 2014-2019
- Department for Transport Long Term Passenger Rolling Stock Strategy 2014
- Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2020
- AECOM report on Leicester – Burton passenger rail service (for Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and North West Leicestershire District Council) 2015
- East Midlands Gateway – Roxhill (Kegworth) Ltd. website
- Roxhill Development Consent Order application documents 2014
- Department for Transport Draft National Policy Statement for National Networks 2015
- Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station - E.On website
- Network Rail London North Eastern Route Sectional Appendix
- East West Rail – Network Rail and EWR Consortium websites
- West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study (draft) 2016





12.APPENDIX 2. SUMMARY OF TRAIN SERVICE OPTIONS

| Destination                             | Estimated GVA (£m p.a) | Output   | Required  |   | Current Status  |
|---|------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Sheffield, Leeds and North East England | 40.9                   | Direct services via HS2                              | Junction between conventional network and HS2 at Toton.<br><br>Rolling stock compatible with both conventional and High Speed networks. |   | Junction between networks not currently being considered by HS2 or Network Rail, but would seem to be physically possible.<br><br>Rolling stock will be compatible with both networks as HS2 services to Newcastle are planned.   |
| Swindon and Bristol                     | 19.5                   | Hourly service via East West Rail (Bedford – Oxford) | Completion of East West Rail (EWR) “Western Section” between Oxford and Bedford, including improved connections between EWR and MML.    | Additional capacity at Leicester station.<br><br>Additional capacity on MML between Kettering and Bedford.<br><br>Additional capacity at Oxford.<br><br>Electrification of MML, EWR and Great Western Main Line (GWML). | Additional capacity at Leicester proposed for CP6.<br><br>Capacity and capability improvements and electrification on MML included in Network Rail’s plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19) or identified as potential candidate schemes for Control Period 6 (2019-24) but future may be uncertain in light of recent reappraisal of other electrification schemes<br><br>Oxford – Bletchley reopening currently in development phase for opening in 2019, but timescales for completion uncertain.. |

**LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY**

|  |      |  |   |   |  |
|--|------|--|---|---|--|
|  |      |  |   |   | <p>Bletchley – Bedford upgrading proposed for CP6, but at relatively early stage. No firm proposals regarding improved connections at Bedford yet developed.</p> <p>Electrification between Oxford and Bedford uncertain in light of recent de-scoping of Great Western electrification.</p>   |
| <b>Sheffield, Leeds and North East England</b> | 17.4 | Conventional rail link to interchange station at Toton, thence via HS2 services. | <p>Construction of interchange station at Toton.</p> <p>Additional or diverted train services to provide link between Leicester and Toton.</p>  |   | Interchange facilities at Toton planned as part of fixed links to Derby and Nottingham, but not clear whether this includes suitable facilities to enable interchange with trains on Erewash Valley line.  |
| <b>Thames Valley</b>                           | 14.7 | Hourly service via Coventry - Leamington   | <p>Additional capacity at Coventry, particularly new platform if services are terminating.</p> <p>Grade-separation of routes at Nuneaton to avoid conflict with West Coast Main Line.</p> | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester.</p> <p>Additional capacity at Oxford.</p> <p>Electrification Leicester to Oxford via Leicester and Great Western Main Line (GWML).</p> | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester proposed for CP6.</p> <p>No plans at present for further remodelling at Nuneaton.</p> <p>Capacity improvements and electrification on GWML have been included in Network Rail’s plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19), but were recently descope. At present, electrification will not extend to Oxford .</p> <p>Oxford – Coventry electrification proposed as part of “Electric Spine” project for</p> |

**LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY**

|                      |      |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------|------|--|--|--|--|
|                      |      |  |  |  | <p>implementation in CP5 or CP6, but future of this project is very doubtful.</p> <p>Remodelling of Oxford station proposed but not yet committed for CP6.</p>   |
| <b>Thames Valley</b> | 13.4 | Hourly service via East West Rail (Bedford – Oxford) | Completion of East West Rail (EWR) “Western Section” between Oxford and Bedford, including improved connections between EWR and MML. | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester station.</p> <p>Additional capacity on MML between Kettering and Bedford.</p> <p>Additional capacity at Oxford.</p> <p>Electrification of MML, EWR and Great Western Main Line (GWML).</p> | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester proposed for CP6.</p> <p>Capacity and capability improvements and electrification on MML included in Network Rail’s plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19) or identified as potential candidate schemes for Control Period 6 (2019-24) but future may be uncertain in light of recent reappraisal of other electrification schemes</p> <p>Oxford – Bletchley reopening currently in development phase for opening in 2019, but timescales for completion uncertain.</p> <p>Bletchley – Bedford upgrading proposed for CP6, but at relatively early stage. No firm proposals regarding improved connections at Bedford yet developed.</p> <p>Electrification between Oxford and Bedford uncertain in light of</p> |

## LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY

|                   |     |  |  |   |  |
|-------------------|-----|--|--|---|--|
|                   |     |  |  |   | recent de-scoping of Great Western electrification.  |
| <b>Manchester</b> | 9.1 | <p>At least hourly, either new local service, new London service or by extension of existing London – Sheffield service).</p> <p>May be routed direct via Dore South curve, via Sheffield, or via reopening of Matlock – Chinley line.</p> |  | <p>Electrification of MML.</p> <p>Additional capacity at Leicester.</p> <p>Remodelling and resignalling at Derby to provide additional capacity.</p> <p>Resignalling and improvements on Hope Valley line (Dore to Chinley) or reopening of Matlock – Chinley route to provide additional capacity.</p> <p>Electrification of route to Chinley and Chinley to Hazel Grove, unless bi-modal (electro-diesel) traction provided, or service is diesel-operated as local Leicester – Manchester.</p> | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester proposed for CP6.</p> <p>Capacity and capability improvements and electrification on MML included in Network Rail’s plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19) or identified as potential candidate schemes for Control Period 6 (2019-24) but future may be uncertain in light of recent reappraisal of other electrification schemes</p> <p>Derby resignalling is in CP5 plan, and further remodelling proposed for CP6.</p> <p>Capacity improvements (but not full resignalling) on Hope Valley route included in “Northern Hub” project in CP5.</p> <p>Electrification of Hope Valley being examined in Network Rail South Yorkshire Route Study.</p> <p>Reopening Matlock – Chinley not proposed. Previous studies indicate would be expensive and not straightforward.</p> |

**LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY**

|  |            |   |   |   |  |
|--|------------|---|---|---|--|
| <p><b>London</b></p>                       | <p>6.9</p> | <p>Sub-60 minute journey time.<br/>At least one additional train per hour.</p>  | <p>Increased maximum line speed south of Leicester.</p> | <p>Electrification of MML.</p>  | <p>Capacity and capability improvements and electrification on MML included in Network Rail's plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19) or identified as potential candidate schemes for Control Period 6 (2019-24) but future may be uncertain in light of recent reappraisal of other electrification schemes</p>   |
| <p><b>Leeds and North East England</b></p> | <p>6.4</p> | <p>At least hourly, either new local service, new London service or by extension of existing London – Sheffield service).<br/>May be routed via Derby, Nottingham or Toton.</p> |   | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester.<br/>Remodelling and resignalling at Derby to provide additional capacity.<br/>Electrification of Erewash Valley route if service routed via Nottingham or Toton<br/>Extension of MML electrification north of Sheffield to East Coast Main Line, unless bi-modal (electro-diesel) traction provided, or service is diesel-operated as local Leicester – Leeds - Newcastle.</p> | <p>Additional capacity at Leicester proposed for CP6.<br/>Capacity and capability improvements and electrification on MML included in Network Rail's plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19) or identified as potential candidate schemes for Control Period 6 (2019-24) but future may be uncertain in light of recent reappraisal of other electrification schemes<br/><br/>Derby resignalling is in CP5 plan, and further remodelling proposed for CP6.<br/>Electrification from Sheffield to East Coast Main Line via both Doncaster and Leeds being considered, but no firm proposals at present regarding implementation dates.</p> |

## LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE RAIL STRATEGY

|                              |      |  |  |  |   |
|------------------------------|------|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Sussex via Thameslink</b> | 4.0  | Extension of some Thameslink services to Leicester to provide cross-London through trains to Gatwick Airport, Brighton and/or Sevenoaks. | Electrification of MML.  | Additional rolling stock, to long-distance standards & specification (potential use of existing Thameslink commuter-type stock is considered undesirable in view of distances involved). | Capacity and capability improvements and electrification on MML included in Network Rail's plans for Control Period 5 (2014-19) or identified as potential candidate schemes for Control Period 6 (2019-24) but future may be uncertain in light of recent reappraisal of other electrification schemes<br><br>New Thameslink stock now being delivered, but is of high-density layout and may be considered unsuitable for Leicester services. |
| <b>Norwich</b>               | 1.5  | Additional hourly service, giving improved half-hourly frequency to Melton Mowbray, Oakham and Peterborough.                             |  | Additional capacity at Leicester.  | Additional capacity at Leicester proposed for CP6.  |
| <b>Burton-upon-Trent</b>     | 0.34 | Hourly or half-hourly Leicester – Burton service, either new local service or new London service.  | Rebuilding Leicester – Burton freight line to full passenger standards. Potential works include resignalling, increased maximum line speed, re-doubling parts of existing single line and new stations at least at larger centres of population.<br><br>Extensive earthworks likely to be required to avoid speed restrictions in view of known sub-structure problems on the route. | Reinstatement of north curve at Knighton Junction likely to be required if journey times are to be competitive.  | No detailed investigative work currently in progress or planned.<br><br>GVA value identified appears unlikely to support major investment required.   |