



The Chartered  
Institute of Logistics  
and Transport

## Response by the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport to the Department of Transport Consultation on Sir Peter Hendy's Re-plan Report

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (“the Institute”) is a professional institution embracing all transport modes whose members are engaged in the provision of transport services for both passengers and freight, the management of logistics and the supply chain, transport planning, government and administration. Our principal concern is that transport policies and procedures should be effective and efficient, based on objective analysis of the issues and practical experience, and that good practice should be widely disseminated and adopted. The Institute has a number of specialist forums, a nationwide structure of locally based groups and a Public Policies Committee which considers the broad canvass of transport policy. Given the breadth of interest in the proposals this submission has been prepared jointly by the Institute’s **Rail Freight Forum**, its **North East Policy Committee** and its **Accessibility and Inclusion Forum** with each response following in turn.

### 1. Rail Freight

1.1 We welcome the opportunity to comment on Sir Peter Hendy's report and agree that, overall, it offers a realistic plan for what can be achieved. We are concerned however by the reduced priority allotted to the rail freight sector and specifically the postponement of the majority of the key freight schemes to CP6, especially as most offer very high BCR's and should therefore be considered as strong candidates for early implementation. Freight schemes are critical to the economic performance and productivity of the UK economy - over 25% of the country's imports arriving in containers move by rail and improving the productivity of these supply chains is of paramount importance.

1.2 We are concerned that enhancement of the Felixstowe branch, and associated capacity improvements at Ely etc, have been deferred. The 32nd daily train from the UK's principal freight location will be introduced in the coming months, and there is frustrated demand already equal to a 35th and 36th train along with predicted growth in the years to come. To move their containers, customers have to introduce road shuttles to locations as far away as Merseyside when they would much rather put these boxes on a train. The failure to address the pressing Felixstowe capacity issues is adding cost to UK plc supply chains, is putting still more HGV's to the A14, M6 etc and is contrary to

Government policy of modal shift from road to rail. Consequently we recommend that the Felixstowe package of enhancements is reprioritised for early implementation.

1.3 We are also concerned that East West Rail Phase 2 and Syston - Stoke Gauge Enhancement will not now occur until CP6 - these are not major or difficult schemes and should be progressed quickly, not least because of the non-freight benefits they bring in relieving congested areas such as the West Midlands and Leicester.

1.4 Regarding the Great Western package of enhancements, we welcome the postponement of electrification into Oxford as it is essential that capacity enhancements are put in place before the wires are erected. However, on the GW Main Line proposals indicate that there will be no capacity for freight between Bristol Parkway and Didcot, even for existing services, let alone future growth of intermodal and aggregates volume. We do not see that it will be possible to path any freight trains over the two track railway between Bristol Parkway and Wootton Bassett with four IEP's an hour in each direction, given that there are only two loops, one of which slow entry/exit speeds and is of limited use.

1.5 Similarly, between Swindon and Didcot, it appears unlikely that freight trains can be accommodated amongst seven IEP's an hour in each direction, unless the passenger services are flighted in a way that is unlikely to be acceptable to GWR and its customers. Network Rail talks of extending the four track section westwards most of the way to Swindon, but this cannot be delivered in less than five years, would be extremely expensive and highly disruptive, as well as being unnecessary. Reinstatement of additional track east of Shrivenham, to provide a second 2-3 mile dynamic loop, would provide adequate capacity at very much lower cost and could be probably delivered within a year or so. As it is, we believe Network Rail will be unable to honour firm contractual access rights and will find itself in the same position as it did on the Midland Main Line several years ago and facing regulatory censure.

## **2. North East**

2.1 We welcome the 'unpausing' of both the Transpennine and Midland Main Line (MML) electrification schemes - while we are disappointed that the major electrification schemes will not be delivered in CP5, the sheer scale of what was proposed in such a short period rang alarm bells in terms of whether it could all be delivered, and we appreciate that the Great Western scheme was at a more advanced state than the MML, even though MML could have delivered some benefits for the North of England (albeit only the most southern parts). We appreciate the need to prioritise resources and commend that this has been done without cancelling the important projects in the North.

2.2 On the Transpennine route, we welcome use of the opportunity provided by the pause to consider the infrastructure needs of the route. In the long term, this will be of greater benefit than having electrified the existing route as it is. However, this opportunity must not be wasted. Usage of Transpennine services is growing, and as well as the potential for longer trains, the conflicts between local and express trains need addressing, and the potential for four-tracking large segments of the North Transpennine in particular should be investigated. Much of the route was reduced from four to two

tracks, and there is therefore the possibility of reinstating those tracks in order to reduce conflicts.

2.3 Four-tracking will enable the delivery of faster journey times between major cities as well as maintaining and growing the potential for local and freight services. Electrification of the two track route could have precluded later four-tracking. In terms of the scheme scope, we also urge that the opportunity is taken to ensure delivery of Selby – Hull and Northallerton – Middlesbrough occur as part of the main programme, to allow all Manchester – Huddersfield – Leeds corridor trains to be electric and maximise capacity on the route. This will also allow further journey time reductions to be made.

2.4 We welcome the delivery of line speed improvements in CP5, in preparation for electrification from Kettering to Sheffield in CP6. Bringing Sheffield – London journey times below 2 hours should be a goal for this Control Period, as well as speeding up other services on the corridor (South Transpennine between Sheffield and Nottingham, CrossCountry between Leeds and Derby)

2.5 We urge that electrification between Sheffield and Doncaster / Fitzwilliam be considered as part of the deliverable for CP6, which will allow local services to be speeded up (which will then knock onto being able to speed up express services), and also provide the first step towards the future electrification of the South Transpennine route, and also a further step towards electrifying the CrossCountry route. At the end of CP6, the Electric Spine electrification will mean that the main CrossCountry route will be electrified in its entirety on the South Coast (AC/DC) and North West routes, with the North East route electrified entirely north of Leeds / Doncaster, a gap between there and Sheffield, and then electrification as far as Derby.

2.6 The lack of passenger capacity on CrossCountry is an issue for the North East Region (Yorkshire & Humber plus the North East), where CrossCountry services not only provide important connections between Tyneside and South Yorkshire, but also connecting our regions to Scotland, the Midlands and the South and South West. The combination of electrification programmes will allow (by the end of CP6, all being well), Southampton (and beyond) to Manchester services to use faster and more comfortable electric units, freeing up the diesel Voyagers for train lengthening on other services. The current proposals mean the loss of Leeds Neville Hill as a maintenance depot for MML InterCity trains, which should allow for increase in Northern's fleet size, but also mean a loss in connectivity with direct trains from Leeds to Leicester no longer able to run.

2.7 We welcome the service enhancements proposed by the new Northern Rail franchisee, yet note that these also place more pressure on station capacity at Leeds and Sheffield in particular. The programme does not state whether provision of the additional through platform (13/14) at Leeds will form part of CP5, nor when the state of the line between Harrogate and York, which has extensive single track sections, a large number of level crossings and small signalboxes will be addressed. In terms of future services, the cities of the North of England desire to open more stations along rail routes, and also provide new services on new or reopened lines, for example to Leeds-Bradford Airport and Washington, development of the Tees Valley Metro local rail services and the potential for tram-train services in West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.

2.8 We commend that work will be done on a new platform at Doncaster and to reduce journey times on the ECML. We hope the benefits will extend to CrossCountry and Transpennine Express. These connect Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester / Liverpool northwards onto the ECML, bringing Newcastle, Tyneside and the Tees Valley towards the core of the Northern Powerhouse on the M62 / Transpennine rail corridor. Transpennine Express's proposed new fleet of 125mph units will be of particular benefit.

### **3. Accessibility**

3.1 With regard to the proposed reduction in Access for All funding during CP5, the Accessibility and Inclusion Forum is concerned that this will have an adverse commercial impact on the rail industry, and wider economic and social impacts which perhaps have not been fully considered.

3.2 The average Access for All scheme cost we understand to be £2.8m, which is higher than the cost elsewhere in Europe. Other problems include - an opaque station selection process (which does not appear to weigh adequately the relative costs and benefits), and that capital and running costs are not considered together. There are examples where over £2m has been spent to avoid an existing alternative step-free street route of 200m - which, although of benefit, offers very poor value for money compared to a scheme which gives step-free access to a station for the first time. There are also stations where the lifts are not switched on all day. It is also possible to detect a maintenance problem exists and rust and pools of water are evident on relatively recent constructions. Scheme selection, construction, maintenance and operation are in the hands of different parties, often with conflicting interests.

3.3 So on the one hand, it is probable one could get more value out the Access for All budget, although in the absence of any identified efficiencies a reduction in the number of schemes is proposed.

3.4 However, due to an ageing population and as a consequence policy initiatives to encourage disabled people off benefits and into work, as well as rising station footfall in general, there will be an increasing demand for step-free access. Only around half of stations have what might be deemed 'acceptable' step-free access, and only a fifth have this to modern standards.

3.5 At least 1,200 stations need investment in step-free access, and each one of these represents a station that some people with reduced mobility cannot use. Cannot use to get to work, cannot use to access health services, and cannot use to generate taxable retail receipts in shopping and leisure facilities. Also their mobility cannot be used to generate fare revenue for train operators.

3.6 We would like to highlight the key role of the Railway in generating external as well as internal economic benefits, which end up back in the Treasury via increased tax and reduced social and health expenditure. Cutting Access for All funding implies a reduction in these benefits.

3.7 Rather than a cut, we need a strategic plan to address these 1,200+ stations, and an increase in funding appropriate to the external benefits. This might include deciding that some will never receive step-free access - which then allows other local policy decisions

to be made. However, it should be possible for an economic case to be made to improve for example half of these over the next few decades. The plans in the Hendy review appear to not amount to a strategic approach to accessibility, in fact they look to be an abandonment of this.

3.8 Also worth consideration is that there will be a knock-on effect of the Small Schemes and Mid Tier funds removal. It is appropriate to note that these reductions in funding taken alongside other DfT initiatives such as station and on-train staffing reductions are simultaneously working to undermine the relationship between the industry, and disabled passengers/ relevant stakeholders. This relationship is critical and were it to be damaged, the potential for complaints and indeed legal action might be expected to increase. The costs associated with such a breakdown in relations might well eclipse the identified Access for All cost savings in this report.

#### **4. Conclusions**

4.1 Sir Peter Hendy's Re-plan Report highlights the many opportunities and challenges facing the railway network. It introduces a degree of realism that was lacking in earlier Network Rail proposals, but we are concerned by the postponement to CP6 of almost all freight enhancements, in spite of the fact they have high or very high BCR's. This is especially true of the Felixstowe branch where there is a critical need for more capacity and scores of containers a day are moving by road as a result. We also have concerns about the Great Western, where we cannot see that there will be any capacity for freight between Bristol Parkway and Didcot, given the proposed passenger service and the lack of infrastructure enhancement – we believe that Network Rail could face regulatory censure for selling capacity that does not exist.

4.2 We welcome the unpausing of MML and Transpennine electrification. We believe that sections of the latter that were dequadrified in 1970/80's should now be restored to four track to provide capacity for stopping passenger services and freight (Diggle is on the only gauge-cleared line across the Pennines). Electrification of the two track route would preclude later four-tracking and is thus to be avoided. We urge that electrification between Sheffield and Doncaster / Fitzwilliam be considered as part of the deliverable for CP6 to allow local services to be speed up and also provide a further step towards electrifying the CrossCountry route and also the first step towards the future electrification of the South Transpennine route. We welcome the service enhancements proposed by the new Northern Rail franchisee, but note that these will place more pressure on station capacity at Leeds and Sheffield, in particular, and further enhancements are likely to be necessary at these locations.

4.3 While it is recognised that more value could be achieved by the Access for All budget, a strategic plan to address the accessibility requirements of 1200+ stations is needed rather than proposals to simply reduce the number of schemes proposed. A plan that is aligned to wider policy initiatives of encouraging greater mobility which increases access to work, boosts tax receipt through shopping and leisure and increases revenue for train operators.

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