

Meeting **JOINT COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT**

Date **23 March 2012** Agenda item number

From **JOINT OFFICER STEERING GROUP**

## **RAIL ISSUES UPDATE**

### **Purpose of the report**

1. To update the Committee on key rail issues in and into the Greater Nottingham Local Transport Plan (LTP) area and rail services across local authority boundaries. The work of the two Councils, although separate, is complementary, and of mutual benefit.

### **Midland Main Line (MML)**

#### Initial Industry plan

2. September 2011 saw the publication of the 'Initial Industry Plan' (IIP) for the railway network for the next 5 year funding period, 2014 - 2019, known as 'Control Period 5' (CP5). It contains a number of proposals for enhancements to the MML :-
  - Lengthening of platforms to allow the lengthening of trains to 11 coaches from the current maximum of 9 coaches;
  - The second phase of the linespeed works, including easing the curve and the speed limit at Market Harborough, although it is not clear whether or not this is just the most severely curved section through Market Harborough station, or whether it also includes (as it should do) the mile northwards to Great Bowden;
  - An improved layout at Leicester, with extra tracks and an improved layout to reduce conflicting movements between MML trains and east-west trains (including freight trains) which cause timetabling constraints;
  - An enhanced layout at Derby;
  - Electrification of the what the IIP calls the 'core' of the MML from London to Nottingham, Derby & Sheffield;for each of which funding is requested for CP5.
3. Inclusion of these schemes in the IIP is most welcome. However, the IIP is merely a set of proposals. The process of determining what will actually happen is
  - July 2012 - announcement by the Minister of the funding for CP5 and a 'High Level Output Statement' (HLOS) which sets out the Government's formal requirements for CP5: the HLOS will be limited to just the couple of most important schemes;
  - August & September 2012 - consultation on the outputs that Network Rail should deliver

- January 2013 - Network Rail publishes its Strategic Business Plan for CP5, effectively a reviewed version of the IIP amended to take account of the Government announcement on funding, the HLOS, and the consultation on outputs;
  - February & March 2013 - consultation on NR's Strategic Business Plan;
  - June 2013 - Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) publishes its 'draft (i.e. initial) determination' of what should be included
  - June - August 2013 - consultation on ORR's draft determination; and
  - October 2013 - ORR publishes its final determination. It is only at this stage that it will become certain which schemes will be funded in CP5.
4. Thus there are a number of stages at which the MML schemes could be excluded. On the other hand there are just 2 stages at which the MML schemes could gain a definitive approval :-
- In July 2012. If anything is specified in the HLOS then that is an absolute Government requirement, and Network Rail and the ORR must deliver during CP5; and
  - In October 2013, when the ORR gives its final approval to the funding for all CP5 schemes.

#### Details of the MML schemes

5. The main element of the **second phase of the linespeed works is easing the curve and the speed restriction at Market Harborough**. This is the scheme that has been extensively reported to previous Joint Committee meetings, and for which we have been trying to obtain funding over the past 3 years, including from the Regional Growth Fund. To be done fully and to get the full benefit, the works need to extend for a mile to Great Bowden, and we will need to lobby to ensure this is done.
6. The **schemes at Leicester and Derby** are the equivalent of the enhancements at Nottingham for which the authorities successfully obtained funding of £11.6million in 2008. The work at Nottingham will be undertaken in August 2013.
7. At the time when we were campaigning for the funding for Nottingham, we were supported by Derby City/shire and Leicester City/shire Councils, not least because the railway is an integrated network and easing congestion at one location produces benefits at adjacent places. In the same way that the enhancements at Nottingham in 2013 will also benefit trains running through Derby & Leicester, the enhancements at both Derby and Leicester in CP5 would also benefit trains to & from Nottingham, and it is very much in our interests that they proceed.
8. The benefit at Leicester is the potential elimination of the conflicts between Nottingham - London trains on the MML and trains on the east - west Birmingham - Cambridge/Felixstowe route that crosses the MML at Leicester. In December NR reported that their initial post 2014 MML timetable assessment showed that Nottingham - London trains could be delayed by 4 minutes at Leicester by conflicts with east-west trains. Such conflicts will

become more likely in future as the number of freight trains from Felixstowe passing through Leicester is increasing rapidly.

9. The ideal solution at Leicester is a flyover. That would completely separate east-west trains from MML trains, eliminate all conflicts and permanently resolve the problem. However, it would be possible to put in an enlarged set of ground-level junctions which would have greater capacity than at present for east-west & MML trains to pass each other. This would be cheaper to install than a flyover (though it would be more expensive to maintain). Network Rail is assessing the costs and benefits of both options, but there is a real danger that the initially cheaper option will be chosen, even though it produces a more limited benefit. The Councils will need to lobby strongly for a flyover on the grounds that only a flyover will eliminate the problem of timetable conflicts, and only a flyover can cope with whatever future levels of traffic may turn out to be.
10. At Derby the enhancement would benefit trains from Sheffield and Derby to London, though not Nottingham's MML trains. It would also produce very big benefits for Nottingham - Derby trains, and is key to reducing the Nottingham - Birmingham journey time to 60 minutes from the current 77 minutes.
11. To get the full benefits needs a set of enhancements that is broadly similar to those which will be installed at Nottingham in 2013, with
  - more track,
  - more (and better located) places at which trains can pass each other
  - an additional platform, and
  - higher speeds,which would enable more trains to run, with all trains running faster, at optimum times, and more reliably.
12. Network Rail is currently assessing a number of options which have various permutations of cost and benefit. As with Leicester it is possible that a partial scheme might produce a lot of benefit, albeit not the full possible benefit, and it will be necessary to lobby hard to ensure that we get the full scheme and the full, future-proofed benefit.
13. Both the Leicester and Derby schemes are once-in-a-generation opportunities to future-proof the layouts at relatively modest cost because the enhancements will cost less if they are done at the same time as other work that has to be done in CP5. Conversely, if the opportunity is not taken now to do a full job then it would cost a huge amount more to do if/when it proved to be necessary in the future.

#### Lobbying for the MML schemes

14. Partly as a result of the initiatives taken by the Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council, other stakeholders along the Midland Main Line (MML) are paying increasing attention to the need for investment and enhancement of the Line. East Midlands Councils was one of the sponsors of the November 2011 event in the House of Commons, and is devoting considerable energy into promoting the needs of the MML. In

December, the Mayor of Leicester launched a local press campaign calling for electrification of the line. And on 28<sup>th</sup> February Leicester MPs spoke in the House of Commons and then met the Minister, Theresa Villiers, to press for electrification of the line.

15. At the instigation of the Managing Director of East Midlands Trains, a meeting of key stakeholders was held in February 2012, at which it was agreed to undertake a high profile campaign to lobby the Government to approve the following enhancements:-

- The second phase of the linespeed works, including easing the curve and the speed limit at Market Harborough through to Great Bowden;
- An improved layout at Leicester, in particular building a flyover to eliminate conflicting movements and hence timetabling constraints;
- A fully improved layout at Derby;
- Electrification of the what the IIP calls the ‘core’ of the MML from London to Nottingham, Derby & Sheffield; and
- Electrification of most of the South Yorkshire local network (Sheffield - Leeds and Sheffield - Doncaster).

The lengthening of the services is not being highlighted in the campaign, on the presumption that it will have to happen anyway to cope with the growth of passengers which is currently running at around 7% per annum.

16. It should be noted that each of the first 4 elements in the stakeholders’ list are proposed in the IIP. However the South Yorkshire local lines in the stakeholders’ list are not proposed for funding in the IIP. Rather the IIP notes them as “additional route options (which) are being developed as potential increments to the core (electrification) scheme”. Clarification is being sought as to whether they include the route used by Nottingham - Leeds trains.

17. The total cost of these enhancements, is believed to be (in approximate round figures)

• Second phase of linespeed works	£ 30m
• Improved layout and flyover at Leicester	£ 50m
• Improved layout at Derby	£ 65m
• Electrification of the MML,	£600m
• Electrification of the South Yorkshire local network	£200m ?
• <b>Total</b>	<b>£945m</b>

of which around half would be incurred in CP5 and the remainder in the following ‘Control Period’ (CP6: 2019 - 2024).

18. A leaflet has been produced by Network Rail, East Midlands Councils and South Yorkshire ITA, setting out the basics of the campaign - a copy is attached as appendix A.

19. The stakeholders are going to organise a lobbying event in the spring - exact date to be determined, but probably May - at which MPs, the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Chambers of Trade & Commerce, and other business bodies and stakeholders could make the case to the Minister.

20. One of the few MPs who attended the November event in the House of Commons was Nicky Morgan MP for Loughborough. In February, along with

Andrew Pritchard from East Midlands Councils, I met and briefed her on the MML, and she has agreed to try to organise an adjournment debate in parliament, and/or a debate with the Minister in Westminster Hall.

#### Letters to/from the Minister

21. On behalf of the two Councils, Cllr Jackson and Cllr Urquhart wrote to the Minister of State for Transport, Theresa Villiers on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2011, and again in November 2011, making the case for investment in the MML, and in particular the scheme at Market Harborough.
22. On 20<sup>th</sup> February a letter was received by Councillor Jackson, written by a DfT civil servant on behalf of the Minister. The letter was a lot less positive than the Minister had been in her previous letter of November 2010. Since the Minister was at that time in hospital it is not known if the less positive tone of the letter accurately reflects the Minister's view. It appears that no corresponding reply was received by the City Council.
23. It is proposed that a further letter be sent to the Minister, seeking continuation of the support she expressed previously.

#### High Speed Rail

24. In January 2012 the Secretary of State, Justine Greening, announced that, following the public consultation during 2011, the Government had decided to confirm the strategy it had announced in 2011 for a high-speed rail network for Britain. It has two main elements
  - A detailed proposed route between London and Birmingham, and
  - An in principle commitment to a network that includes two 'arms' north from Birmingham,
    - one to Manchester and the north west, and
    - one to the East Midlands, Sheffield, and Leeds, with connections onwards to Newcastle and Edinburgh,plus short sections connecting directly to Heathrow and to the Channel tunnel line to Paris, Belgium, Germany and beyond.
25. Following this 'in-principle' commitment to an eastern arm serving the East Midlands, details will be published in summer 2012 of proposed route and station options. This will be followed by a period of full public consultation. Details will be reported to future Joint Committee meetings.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

25. It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report.

#### **Contact Officers**

Jim Bamford, Communities Department, Nottinghamshire County Council  
Tel: 0115 9773172  
E-mail: [jim.bamford@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:jim.bamford@nottscc.gov.uk)  
Chris Carter, Development Department, Nottingham City Council

Tel: 0115 8763940

E-mail: [chris.carter@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:chris.carter@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

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## Low-carbon economic growth for the South Yorkshire and the East Midlands

### Upgrading and electrifying the Midland Main Line

Upgrading and electrifying the Midland Main Line is imperative for economic growth. It would reduce travelling times between key cities, meet business demand for rail freight, improve performance, reduce costs and carbon emissions, and deliver £450m in wider economic benefits. Local councils, businesses and Local Enterprise Partnerships from across the East Midlands and South Yorkshire are united in their support for this crucial investment.

In July 2012, Government will announce whether it will fund the proposals to electrify the line and undertake improvements at key locations as part of its High Level Statement of Outputs (HLOS). Even in times of austerity, the case for this investment is compelling.

#### Low-carbon economic growth

The environmental case is clear. Electrifying the line from Bedford to Sheffield could **cut carbon emissions by 13,000 tonnes per year**. Meeting growing demand for **rail freight** would lead to further emission reductions as more lorries are encouraged off roads and on to rail.

The business case is clearer still.

The Midland Main Line connects **four of the largest cities and one of the fastest growing areas in England** to London and each other. Reducing journey times between these cities will help businesses access markets, and improve the effectiveness of labour markets.

An independent report prepared for East Midlands Councils and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive by consultants Arup estimated that upgrading and electrifying the Midland Main Line would **generate £450m worth of wider economic benefits** in terms of higher productivity of business.

#### Reducing Costs

Electrification reduces significantly the costs of rolling stock, energy, track access and maintenance. The latest estimates suggest that electrifying the line from Bedford to Sheffield would **save up to £60m every year in industry costs**. That means within ten years of completion, the electrification of the line between Bedford and Sheffield will have paid for itself and will continue to reduce the cost of rail to the taxpayer year on year.

#### Key benefits

- **Cut rail industry costs** by up to £60m per year
- **Reduce journey times** between London and Sheffield by up to 14 minutes
- **Slash carbon emissions** by up to 13,000 tonnes a year
- **Create hundreds of jobs** during construction
- **Add £450 million** of wider economic benefits
- **Improve freight access** by providing W10 gauge clearance throughout the route
- **Widen access to HS2** from areas not directly served by new stations

### Faster journeys

Upgrading and electrifying the line could **reduce journey times by 13-14 minutes** between London and Sheffield. This will also enable journey time reductions to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Northamptonshire, working towards locally agreed aspirations for Sheffield in 100 minutes, Nottingham in 90 and Leicester in 60.

### Long-term growth

The upgrade and electrification of the Midland Main Line will provide the first step towards creating a **modern, efficient inter-urban rail system for the East Midlands and Sheffield City Region**. It is an essential prerequisite to creating an integrated fast long distance rail system, ahead of, and alongside High Speed 2. The schematic map opposite, prepared by Arup for East Midlands Councils and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, shows the proposed upgrades and estimated journey time improvements on the line. They comprise:

- Improvements to enable higher line speeds scheduled to be delivered by 2014;
- Line speed improvements and electrification of the line from Nottingham to Chesterfield via Langley Mill;
- Line speed improvements and additional electrification to 'in-fill' the gaps on selected routes between Sheffield and Leeds;
- Accommodating train lengthening for high speed services (up to 11 car formations), which will be realised through procuring an extra 13 train units;
- Derby station track re-modelling;
- Dore Junction re-doubling;
- Further line speed improvements at Market Harborough;
- Upgrading Sheffield Station, including track remodelling;
- platform extensions to enable longer trains;
- Re-signalling and track remodelling in the Leicester area; and
- Electrification of the line from Bedford to Sheffield via Leicester and Derby, Trent Junction to Nottingham, plus Kettering to Corby.

