

The Network Rail Hope Valley Capacity Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions – February 2015

1. The Plans

1.1 What are you doing and why?

Demand for rail travel between Sheffield and Manchester is increasing, with forecasts showing demand will grow 56 per cent in Sheffield and 66 per cent in Manchester by 2029.

To help meet future demand we need to increase capacity on the Hope Valley line. We are proposing to do this by improving sections of the railway between Bamford station and Jaggars Lane Bridge in Hathersage, and around Dore & Topley station. Our plans will create places for fast passenger services to overtake slower moving freight and stopping passenger trains. This will allow more trains to run, and increase the reliability of services on the line.

The project is a key part of over £1 billion of investment to deliver faster, more frequent services across the north of England.

- **Our plans East of Bamford station:** We want to build a 1km passing loop between Bamford station and Jaggars Lane bridge in Hathersage. The new track would run alongside the existing railway.
- **Our plans in Dore:** Since we last consulted in November 2013 our plan for the railway near Dore & Topley station have remained largely in line with those originally proposed.

We want to extend the existing Dore South Curve railway line between West View Lane and Dore South Junction to allow fast passenger trains to overtake slower freight services.

A second track serving Dore & Topley station will be created and a new platform constructed. This would be accessed by a new footbridge and lifts.

1.2 What are the benefits?

This work will deliver better journeys on the route between Manchester and Sheffield, improving capacity, frequency and reliability.

1.3 How many trains currently run on the Hope Valley line, and what kind of service pattern will the work provide extra capacity for?

Currently, the timetabled service pattern consists of 2x fast trains an hour, 1 x local stopping every two hours and 3 x freight trains every two hours.

Our proposals would create extra capacity for a timetabled service pattern of 3x fast trains an hour, 1 x local stopping service an hour and continue the 3 x freight trains every two hours.

These proposed service levels are agreed by an industry wide group including Passenger Transport Executives, Train Operating Companies, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Network Rail.

1.4 In your last consultation in November 2013 (consultation on provision of new loops at Dore and at Grindleford) the scope of the scheme was four fast trains per hour. Why has the scope now changed to three?

The previous proposal of 4x fast trains per hour was assessed by an industry wide group in relation to value for money and revised to 3x fast trains per hour plus capacity to enable an hourly stopping service. Timetabling constraints meant it would not be possible to evenly space 4x fast trains in an hour, so the reduction in the number of fast trains will not significantly affect the longest period between trains.

1.5 Why was the work that was previously proposed at Chinley removed from the scope of this project?

The work at Chinley was required to accommodate the 4 fast trains per hour, and also to facilitate train services from the Manchester direction terminating at Chinley. The changes to the proposed timetable specification mean that this work is no longer required.

1.6 How much will the scheme cost and how is it funded? Will costs fall as a result of the scope change?

This project is a key part of over £1 billion of investment to deliver faster, more frequent services across the north of England. We are still working on our cost estimates for the Hope Valley Scheme. This process is currently on-going and the estimates at this stage of development are due for completion by June 2015.

Network Rail is funded through the DfT to maintain, operate and renew the national rail network, and to undertake specified enhancements to the network. The Northern Hub scheme is amongst the schemes which the DfT wish us to progress.

1.7 How will the project help commuters in the Hope Valley?

The investment will create capacity for a stopping passenger train to run on an hourly basis. This is a big improvement on the current provision through the Hope Valley.

1.8 Will there be new / longer trains on this route as a result of this project?

Network Rail owns, manages and develops Britain's railway infrastructure – the 20,000 miles of track, 40,000 bridges and viaducts and the thousands of level crossings, signals and stations (the largest of which we also run).

We are responsible for creating the extra capacity needed on the route – but we do not operate the passenger or freight trains.

Most passenger train services are run under franchises awarded by the Government to the train operating companies (TOCs). These franchises hold responsibility for the rolling stock (trains) on each route.

The Northern and TransPennine Express (TPE) franchises are currently up for renewal, and a number of operators have been shortlisted to bid for them in a tendering process. The new TOCs will be required to successfully deliver transformational improvements for the Northern and TPE franchises.

The DfT has specified that all Pacer trains on Northern will be replaced by 2020, and that bidders will need to include at least 120 new build carriages for use on non-electrified routes in their rolling stock plans. The DfT has also specified that there will be a full modernisation of remaining diesel and electric Northern trains.

Full information on the new Northern and FTP rail franchise specifications can be found on the DfT's website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-northern-and-transpennine-express-rail-franchises>

1.9 Will you be doing any work on the signalling?

As part of this project we will introduce new signalling equipment in both locations that will allow trains of up to 675m in length to use the new infrastructure.

Wider renewal of signalling along the length of the Hope Valley is not within the scope of this scheme.

1.10 Will there be improved passenger information displays at stations along the line as the result of the upgraded signalling?

At Dore station, where we are adding another platform, we will work with the station operator to identify appropriate information systems.

There are no plans as part of this scheme to enhance facilities at other stations along the route.

1.11 Will the amount of freight trains using the route, and specifically overnight trains, increase as a result of this project?

No, an increase in capacity for more freight services is not included as part of this scope.

1.12 What does the Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) process involve? When can comments be made? What will we be able to see when the order is submitted?

A TWAO provides Network Rail with the powers to construct and operate the new infrastructure.

Network Rail will submit an application for a TWAO to the Secretary of State for Transport for the necessary consents to deliver this work.

When we submit the application we will advertise this in the local press and formally contact specified consultees (for example affected land owners and the local authorities). We will also put up site notices with information about the application.

A copy of our application will be made available on our website www.networkrail.co.uk/hopevalley and a copy of all the application documents will be available to view at a public venue.

Objections, representations and letters of support can be made by anyone to the Secretary of State within a 42 day period after submission of the application.

You can find out more information about the TWAO process on the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-and-works-act-orders-a-brief-guide-2006>

1.13 When will the scheme be built?

Network Rail is submitting a TWAO application in late August/early September 2015 in order to gain the necessary powers to build the scheme. Subject to the application being approved, we hope to begin construction in 2017 and complete work on the new infrastructure by December 2018.

1.14 Why are you consulting with us? Will you really listen to our comments?

We take our responsibility to local communities and stakeholders very seriously, and we are committed to carrying out robust and inclusive consultations on our plans. The consultation process is important to us as it helps us to identify any key areas of concern. All feedback submitted to us will be considered and, where feasible, will influence the design going forward. A consultation report which summarises the consultation undertaken and the issues raised is submitted to support the TWAO application.

A second round of consultation will take place in May 2015, where we will demonstrate how we're responding to feedback. Where it hasn't been possible to incorporate suggestions, we will seek to explain why.

2. Work at Dore

2.1 Dore is a historic station – will the new footbridge and lifts be designed sympathetically with the station's heritage?

Network Rail will work with the local planning authority to agree an appropriate design for the new station bridge.

2.2 Will the station be furnished with a new waiting room or larger shelter to serve the new platform?

This will form part of discussions with the train operator responsible for the management of Dore & Totley station.

2.3 Will the public footpath near Twentywell lane remain open while work takes place?

Temporary alterations may be required to the public right of way near Twentywell Lane during construction but we are committed to maintaining this route for public use except at specified times when temporary closure may be required for safety reasons. Any disruption would be advertised and communicated well in advance of the works.

2.4 The car park at Dore is already very full. Will this project provide any additional car parking at the station, or elsewhere?

The new 130 space car park at Dore & Topley station was opened by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE) in 2013, and is managed by Northern Rail.

Increasing the amount of parking spaces available is not within Network Rail's remit or part of the scope of this scheme.

However, feedback received during this consultation has highlighted the issue of car parking as a key concern amongst the community in Dore. We have passed this feedback on to SYLTE and we will continue to engage with them as the project details develop.

2.5 Will the car park be impacted by the construction work?

There is potential that the scheme will need to acquire temporarily a small area of the station car park during the construction period. As part of our Environmental Impact Assessment, we will assess the impacts of removing a limited area of the car park and recommend any appropriate mitigation measures during the construction period, after consultation with the relevant highways authority.

As mentioned above, we are aware of the current issue with car park use, as highlighted by local residents during consultation, and so understand any mitigation will need to take this into account.

This information will be included in the Traffic and Transport construction section of the Environmental Statement, which will be submitted as part of the TWAO application.

2.6 Why can't freight trains just run at night? Then we wouldn't need such a long loop?

There is an existing commitment to provide a capability to freight operators of three trains every two hours along this route. The ability to run freight trains at night is limited by the availability of the network. Not all signal boxes are open 24 hours a day, which limits availability in some areas. Also, a significant amount of maintenance of the network is carried out overnight, which again limits the ability to run trains at night.

The ability to run longer freight trains provides the opportunity to carry more freight by rail without running additional freight trains.

2.7 Would this work leave space for any further capacity increasing projects, such as building more lines into Sheffield or a connection with Supertram, in the future?

The works that we are undertaking at Dore will not prevent the possibility of further platforms being added at a later date, whether to access the Midland Mainline, or for trams.

2.8 Dore & Topley station is unmanned – how would the new lift at the station be managed? Who would look after the lifts if they breakdown / are vandalised?

The train operator that manages the station would be responsible for the operation of the new lifts, and Network Rail would talk to the train operator about any proposed changes.

There are similar lifts in unmanned stations already in operation across the rail network. The lifts would be equipped and monitored via CCTV, with power to the doors controlled from this central point. This allows the lift operator to prevent access to the lifts to vandals etc. Both lifts would also be equipped with help buttons and will be covered by a maintenance contract including response and repair.

3. Work between Bamford station and Juggers Lane in Hathersage

3.1 Why does the loop need to be built in this location? Have you considered any other options?

We have considered a total of 13 alternative locations. A shortlist of three potential options was identified during 2013 and the loop east of Bamford Station will form part of the TWAO application.

In arriving at our preferred option we have worked with industry partners and Network Rail's experts in several disciplines in order to inform our decision to progress the loop east of Bamford Station.

3.2 What does the option selection process involve?

Our decision has been based on a process of weighing up a wide range of variables to understand strengths and weaknesses. Examples of these include: the temporary and permanent effect on the local community and land owners, permanent and temporary land take requirements, railway capacity and performance, maintainability, environmental constraints, and the cost and ease of construction.

The preferred option achieved the best results in terms of suitability from an engineering and operational perspective. It is also the best location for construction access.

3.3 I'm concerned that this option is not the best choice, and that other options would have less of an impact.

All options considered carry the risk of direct and indirect impacts on local environments and communities. We recognise that there will be localised impacts associated with the project at our preferred location.

However, having weighed up all the options, no other option proved better in the round in terms of impacts on the environment or communities. Potential impacts have been identified and we are carrying out a full Environmental Impact Assessment

(EIA) to understand the impacts and to ensure that these can be effectively mitigated and managed.

3.4 Will the noise of freight trains stopping in the passing loop impact residential properties nearby?

The EIA process identifies whether there are predicted to be environmental impacts or effects from the scheme and if so recommends appropriate mitigation in the Environmental Statement (ES). The Noise and Vibration section of the EIA will assess in detail the effects of freight trains braking, stopping, idling and accelerating out of the loop and if the effects are considered “significant” (having an impact) then appropriate mitigation will be recommended.

3.5 Will updated plans available at the next consultation show us exactly where the freight trains will stop?

Further surveys and design work are being undertaken and we expect to come to the next consultation with an updated design which incorporates feedback from the previous consultation where possible.

3.6 Will every freight train use the loop?

No, not every freight train will need to use the loop. The actual timetable that runs will reflect the requirements of the various train operators, but an indicative timetable produced as part of the development works shows one freight train using the loop every two hours during the day. No freight services will be timetabled to use the loop at night, when there are no passenger services running.

4. Construction and environment

4.1 Has the noise impact that increased services along the Hope Valley line will have on lineside neighbours been taken into consideration?

We directly assess the operational noise impacts of an increased service and the use of the new loops on lineside neighbours potentially affected in the vicinity of the scheme.

At the same time the EIA will assess the remote effects further from the scheme by looking at the volume increase in the number of trains generally on the route that the scheme facilitates.

4.2 Will any of the old stone bridges in the area be impacted by this work?

Two underbridges will need to be widened including one concrete bridge and one more traditional structure which has been previously modified. Full details of how the bridges will be affected are not yet established.

4.3 How do you measure noise impact? Will the impact of the noise stopping freight trains make be assessed?

The noise specialist will use a process or calculation procedure called the Calculation of Rail Noise (CRN). This looks at the current timetable, how often trains run and what type of trains they are. The specialist will also look at the geography of the land, such as hills and valleys, and identify exactly where residential properties are situated.

CRN deals only with the noise from moving trains, but does include guidance on passing loops. Network Rail has listened to consultation feedback and arranged for on-site noise measurements at a siding facility to be taken of freight trains arriving (decelerating), waiting (idling) and leaving (accelerating) as part of the work. This ensures that the noise assessment for both sites will be comprehensive.

The findings of the assessment will be included in the Environmental Statement, which will support the TWAO application.

4.4 What is the difference the noise levels of a moving and a stopping/starting freight train?

The difference in the noise levels of a freight train dependent on the mode of operation will be assessed in the EIA and reported in the ES. At this time the actual noise levels cannot be reported but will be acquired by on-site noise monitoring, most likely at a rail siding facility.

4.5 Will construction involve weekend working or 24 hour working?

The main construction work would be undertaken during daylight hours. However, there will be times when night time and weekend working will be necessary when trains aren't running on the network. This will help protect the safety of our workers.

4.6 How long will work take place for?

If we secure the necessary consents to deliver this project, we expect work to take around 18 months to complete. Construction would take place in various phases meaning that we would not be working continuously in one area for the full 18 months. Once a contractor has been appointed we will have more clarity on the length of different phases of construction.

4.7 This work you are doing will devalue my property. What are you going to do about this?

Network Rail has written directly to any potentially affected landowners or residents, and face-to-face meetings have been held with some landowners to discuss the potential impacts of the scheme on their property.

Any landowner with a compensatable interest will be entitled to compensation in accordance with the compensation code which will apply to the TWAO.

4.8 How will site compounds be used?

We need to create temporary compounds to enable us to carry out the construction work. Typically this would include site offices, welfare facilities, storage of construction materials, storage of plant and machinery and car parking. We will work with our contractors to ensure minimal disruption to those who live and work around the compound areas.

4.9 What about any other environmental impacts?

The railway is a sustainable form of transport and we work hard to reduce our impact on the environment. We are carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment for our work at both sites. This will include analysis of the potential effects of the proposed railway and its construction, including:

- Noise and air quality
- Heritage
- Traffic and transport
- Visual and landscape
- Ecology, biodiversity and conservation

Appropriate mitigation measures will be recommended to address the effects of the proposals.

An Environmental Statement will be produced to present the findings of the assessment and will support the TWAO application.