

Thursday 10 May 2018

## **Proposed Western Rail Link to Heathrow Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. How did you select the proposed route?**

A. We looked at five potential routes and considered the best journey times, environmental constraints and building options and developed the option that provided the best solution in each case.

We are now considering two options for the final section of the tunnel closest to Heathrow:

- Option A would allow trains to turn back at Terminal 5, as well as run through to Terminals 2 and 3.
- Option B would allow trains to run to Terminal 5, through to Terminals 2 and 3 and on to London Paddington. This option would remove the section of track required to allow trains to turn back, shortening the tunnel by 100m. This would reduce construction time and costs, and remove the need for an access building close to Heathrow.

### **Q. When will the final design be completed?**

A. We have continued to amend the proposed design to take into account new environmental requirements, feedback from earlier public consultations, integration with other major infrastructure projects in the area and also future use of the railway.

We are now consulting to help us finalise our proposals, after which we intend to submit a Development Consent Order application in 2019.

### **Q. How long will it take you to build the proposed scheme?**

A. The estimated timeframe for the main construction work is approximately five years.

### **Q. How many trains will run on the new service and where will they stop?**

A. We propose four trains an hour in each direction, stopping at Reading, Slough and Terminal 5, with alternate trains stopping at Twyford and Maidenhead.

**Q: Why aren't trains stopping at Langley?**

In developing the proposed train service we have considered the capacity of the Great Western Main Lines and impact of these 4 additional Heathrow services on the existing GWR, Elizabeth line and freight services to ensure we are providing the best offering to passengers. Stopping at Langley would impact on other services.

**Q. Will you be reviewing the station facilities where the service stops?**

A. Yes, we are reviewing facilities at each of the stations to assess the impact of additional passengers.

**Q. How will this project impact on properties in the area?**

A. The details of the proposal are still being progressed. We will not be in a position to confirm the potential impact on individual properties until our design is finalised and we have completed the Environmental Impact Assessment. We are assessing the potential impact on properties and our first stage assessment is in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report. Those concerned will be directly contacted.

**Q. What is the likely impact on the environment?**

A. We are undertaking a full Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed scheme and will report the findings in our Environmental Statement. At this stage, we have compiled some preliminary environmental information which is available on our website. [www.networkrail.co.uk/heathrow](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/heathrow)

**Q. How much disruption will be caused to road and rail users?**

A. This is a major piece of rail infrastructure which will require significant construction and engineering work. We will closely monitor the construction works and do everything practicable to minimise the impact, however some disruption is inevitable. Further details on the construction strategy and any proposed mitigation for the scheme will be made available at the 11 May to 22 June consultation events.

**Q. How disruptive will this project be to local residents and businesses?**

A. Please refer to the Preliminary Environmental Information Report, which is available on our website at [networkrail.co.uk/heathrow](http://networkrail.co.uk/heathrow)

**Q. What are your plans regarding Hollow Hill Lane?**

A. The section of Hollow Hill Lane that runs under Chequers Bridge, near Langley station would need to close as a result of the proposed scheme, as the lines for the new railway are at a similar level to the road. It would be in use only by construction traffic while the new railway was being built but would close permanently once the scheme was complete.

We will work closely with the Local Highway Authorities to identify what the impact of a road closure would be and what mitigations/improvements could be required as a result. We have undertaken traffic surveys to help us understand the impact of closing the road and the impact of construction traffic and a full Traffic Impact Assessment will be included within the Environmental Statement.

**Q. Why do you need site compounds?**

A. We use site compounds to constrain construction activities and minimise the impact in the local area. Typically each site compound will have site offices; welfare facilities; storage of construction materials; storage of plant and machinery; car parking.

**Q. How will you remove the excavated material from site?**

To reduce the impact on the local road network, Network Rail is proposing to build temporary rail sidings at Langley to allow material excavated from the tunnel to be transported by rail. Clean material would be transported from a storage area by conveyor belt to the new sidings.

We are also exploring opportunities to reuse this material on other local infrastructure schemes including CEMEX mineral extraction, located at the northern end of the WRLtH construction boundary, where excavated material from the tunnel would emerge.

**Q. What mitigation measures will be provided for noise, visual and landscape impacts once a new line is operational?**

A. We will consider and report on the operational impact of the proposed scheme within our Environmental Statement as part of our Development Consent Order. Our preliminary environmental mitigation is illustrated in Figures 3.5 – 3.11 of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report. These show a holistic approach to environmental design for the Proposed Scheme including environmental barriers, proposed planting/seeding, biodiversity and nature conservation measures, noise attenuation, heritage conservation and enhancement, flood attenuation and water course protection.

**Q: How much will the scheme cost and who is funding it?**

A: It is not possible to provide a final estimate until the design is completed, although it is expected to be in the region of £1bn.

The Department for Transport is currently funding Network Rail to draw up proposals for the WRLtH. Its delivery will remain subject to a satisfactory business case and the agreement of acceptable terms with the Heathrow aviation industry.

**Q: Is this project linked to the possible expansion of Heathrow Airport?**

A: No, this project is based on serving the needs of the airport's existing two-runway capacity.

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**Q: Are there plans to relocate the Heathrow Express depot to Langley?**

A: The proposal to relocate the Heathrow Express depot to Langley, as part of the HS2 project, is no longer required and this is why it is not included in our design or assessments.

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