12th March 2012

All-Party Parlimentary Group for High Speed Rail
Rail Capacity Inquiry

Dear Sir/Madam

ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR HIGH SPEED RAIL
RAIL CAPACITY INQUIRY: EVIDENCE SUBMITTED BY THE WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT EXECUTIVE (METRO)

Please find enclosed a submission from Metro to the above-mentioned inquiry.

Rail has played a hugely important role in the sustainable economic development of West Yorkshire in the past few decades, and its role is set to become even more important in the next two decades. Rail demand has grown significantly over the last decade, with 40% growth since the Northern Rail franchise began in 2004.

Economic growth in West Yorkshire depends on having a growing labour market that can easily get to/from places of work and to business and leisure opportunities. At the same time, to ensure our Local Transport Plan carbon emission targets are met and quality of life enhanced, this increased demand for mobility needs to be met by more sustainable transport modes. The changing economic geography, with a move to knowledge based sectors in town and city centres e.g. the financial and business services and digital industries, makes rail a particularly important transport mode to cater for increased mobility and therefore demand. Evidence shows that more rail capacity is needed to cater for increased demand for mobility, and that high speed rail is a key part of this wider plan.

I hope that you find the enclosed submission useful.

Yours faithfully

David Hoggarth

Metro Response

1. This paper is Metro's response to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for High Speed Rail's request for evidence supporting an enquiry in to the future capacity requirement for Britain's railways. Metro is the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (PTE). Metro represents the interests of the five local authorities that make up West Yorkshire (Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield.)

A. How do you view the current capacity situation on Britain's railways?

2. Evidence[1] shows that the classic network will run out of capacity in the medium term. The past 15 years have seen significant growth in passenger and freight use of the rail network across the UK. In Yorkshire specifically, passenger numbers increased by 65% between 1998 and 2011[2].

3. Metro's own analysis of current demand levels shows that many of the rail lines into Leeds are already above total seating capacity, with many approaching total capacity levels.

4. The recently conducted Yorkshire Rail Network Study (YRNS) has shown that limitations in connectivity between the North's city regions will constrain future economic growth. The current capability of the rail network in terms of capacity, journey times and reliability is restricting the potential for additional and faster services to release this economic growth. Further the lack of spare capacity (both on train and track) will constrain future demand growth, particularly for peak period journeys to the major city centres, which in itself will constrain future economic growth. The study identifies potential benefits of up to £12.0bn that could be generated through additional rail connectivity and capacity.

5. Rail service patterns on many routes reflect the compromise between freight trains, express trains and local stopping services sharing the same lines. The predominantly two track railway network limits options to accommodate this mixture of services while still delivering attractive passenger and freight services. Additionally there are a number of network bottlenecks where rail services are often delayed or timetables are compromised because of a shortage of "paths". Typically these bottlenecks are at the major city centre stations including Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield.

6. Together, these compromises result in slower journey times and delays which impact on the entire city region. For example, it takes almost two hours to travel the 70 miles between Leeds and Nottingham, via Sheffield, meaning the average speed of services equates to 36 miles per hour.

7. Unless addressed, these constraints will limit economic benefits and encourage car commuting whilst the levels of crowding predicted for the future is likely to suppress demand.

---

[1] East Coast Main Line 2016 Capacity Review; Network Rail; December 2010

[2] Yorkshire Rail Network Study; Metro, South Yorkshire PTE and Leeds City Region; to be published in March 2012

B. What capacity do you believe Britain's railways will require in the future?

8. The evidence suggests that demand for mobility will continue to rise over the next decades[3]. If this demand is to be met by additional capacity on the road network, carbon emissions and other harmful environmental impacts are likely to increase, congestion will worsen and quality of life for a large number of areas will worsen. If the UK is to meet its carbon reduction targets but at the same time enable economic prosperity and growth, then a solution to meet future demands for mobility is needed.

9. Passenger numbers into Leeds are expected to continue to grow for the foreseeable future - by up to 62% by 2029[4]. Metro has also carried out its own demand forecasting based on how rail demand will grow if the West Yorkshire LTP3 is fully delivered, which suggests that rail demand could double by 2026. This demonstrates that there is an immediate need to provide additional capacity on most of the rail routes serving West Yorkshire, just to keep up with predicted growth. In addition, there is potentially suppressed demand on many routes, suggesting that widespread capacity improvements are required in the near future.

10. There is a clear need for faster and more frequent rail services between all the city regions of northern England. Connections between Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester city regions are particularly important and many trains are suffering from increased levels of crowding.

11. The Yorkshire Rail Network Study has shown that there is strong evidence that good transport links can support economic interaction between city regions, which in turn supports a stronger regional and national economy. Without investment in additional capacity, the links from West Yorkshire to Sheffield and Manchester will worsen as increasing demand places more pressure on the network.

12. Growth has also been evident on the long-distance Inter-City network. Despite infrastructure upgrades to manage capacity, the patronage growth on the East Coast, West Coast and Midland Mainlines has resulted in overcrowding, especially on peak services. Demand growth is forecast to continue, with Network Rail projections suggesting that by 2036[5], patronage on long distance journey types has a potential growth of up to:
    - 78% on East Coast Mainline (ECML)
    - 77% on Midland Mainline (MML)
    - 89% on West Cost Mainline (WCML)

13. As passenger demand continues to grow, there is a risk that freight services will be marginalised, resulting in slower services and lack of capacity to accept any growth in demand. This is likely to result in additional lorry journeys with a resulting negative impact on carbon emissions and congestion on the strategic road network.

---

[3] Tight, MR; Bristow, AL; Pridmore, AM; May, AD. *What is a sustainable level of CO_2 emissions from transport activity in the UK in 2050?* **Transport Policy**, 3, 12, 235-244, 2005

[4] Northern Route Utilisation Strategy; Network Rail; May 2011

[5] Network RUS – Scenarios, Network Rail [2009]

C. What is the best way of providing capacity and future proofing Britain's rail network?

14. In the short term there is an immediate need to provide additional rail capacity and journey opportunities for important local commuter and inter regional journeys. There is also an overarching need to reduce the cost of the railway in line with the McNulty Review. Reflecting this it is a need to lengthen trains to provide additional capacity and identify a rolling programme of electrification. In the longer term there will be a need for additional infrastructure to enable more frequent passenger and freight services to be operated.

15. For longer distance services the experience of the West Coast Route Modernisation programme shows that in addition to the huge disruption to passengers of upgrading existing lines and the resulting negative impact on revenue, the cost of upgrading existing lines to similar standards would be hugely expensive. In addition, it has only provided a medium term solution as the West Coast Main Line is predicted to be at capacity once again in less than 15 years.

16. There is a strong economic case for enhancing the capacity and performance of the north-south intercity network. The benefits are particularly important in re-balancing the economy.

17. The Government's own analysis shows that high speed rail (HSR) would deliver economic benefits worth £44.1 billion over 60 years[6]. Work undertaken by Northern Way[7] has demonstrated around £6 billion worth of agglomeration benefits. Work undertaken by the High Speed Rail Eastern Network Partnership (including Leeds, Sheffield, Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley City Regions, West and South Yorkshire PTEs and Derby and Nottingham City Councils)[8] shows the total wider economic impacts of the eastern route of the proposed national high speed rail network are estimated to be £4.2bn. These comprise productivity benefits of bringing businesses closer together of £2.6bn, imperfect competition benefits of £0.8bn, and economic benefits of enabling workers to access more productive jobs by releasing capacity on existing rail routes of £0.8bn. This is additional to the benefits from reduced journey times for passengers (conventional transport benefits) which have been estimated by HS2 to be £20.8bn[9], for the Y-shaped network north of the West Midlands.

18. HSR could help support transformational economic change across the UK and in particular the north of England. This would help to achieve the Government's objective of rebalancing the economy. The benefits quoted above are conservative as they do not take into account the transformational benefits that high speed rail can bring to areas like West Yorkshire which have not been quantified in the DfT's assessment. Furthermore, the experience of European and other countries in the development of HSR networks suggests that there

---

[6] http://www.hs2.org.uk/assets/x/78304

[7] http://northernwaytransportcompact.com/North_South_Connectivity.html

[8] High Speed Rail Eastern Network Partnership – Technical Business Case Work on High Speed Rail – Final Report. Arup. Published summer 2011.

[9] http://www.hs2.org.uk/assets/x/78304

are significant transformational benefits to regional economies (see Lille in France as a good example).

19. The development of a high speed rail network in the UK with significantly quicker journey times will also help to address the challenges of global competitiveness of the UK and its city regions. Other countries are developing high speed rail networks as the solution to meeting the lower carbon mobility needs of their modern economies. The UK risks being left behind if it decides not to develop high speed rail further. Global competitiveness is critical to the economic future of West Yorkshire.

20. It is important to have a firm commitment now to deliver the full Y-shaped network, including the link to Leeds, so that the supporting network of rail services can be developed. The improvements offered by High Speed Rail, in particular the need for additional capacity on service between West Yorkshire, London and the West Midlands, are required now which means that a connection to High Speed 2 Phase 1 from 2026 is essential.

D. What will the effects of extra capacity be, beyond addressing journey supply? What would be the risk by failing to provide capacity?

21. The 'freeing-up' of capacity on the classic rail network will enable new and better inter urban services on the East Coast and Midland Main lines as well as continued inter-city services to London from parts of West Yorkshire that will not be directly served by HSR.

22. Retaining frequent long distance services on existing lines will be important for a number of reasons. High speed rail will not access all the locations that currently have direct services to London, and it may not access some city centres. These places will still need fast, frequent services to the capital. There will be a need to provide good services to and between intermediate locations (Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield and Wakefield) which are important in their own right, some are planned to grow significantly, and some are also important hubs for local and regional rail networks, providing connections to other significant places. By the time the full high speed rail network is complete, overall demand growth for long distance rail travel is likely to have increased substantially, and high speed rail will create additional demand. It will be important to retain long distance services on existing routes to provide a significant overall increase in capacity.

23. Additional rail capacity should be freed up on the East Coast, Midland and West Coast Main Lines for freight. Rail freight distribution centres in the City Region are situated at Wakefield Europort and Stourton in Leeds. Network Rail's Strategic Freight Network programme will mean that the rail network to these freight centres will soon be gauge enhanced. Improved rail capacity on the classic rail network (due to HSR) connected to these freight centres will further facilitate growth in rail freight to/from West Yorkshire which will help support and create logistics jobs.

24. West Yorkshire has already lost direct air links to London Heathrow and to London Gatwick. Whilst total numbers on these routes were relatively small in comparison to inter-city rail travel to/from West Yorkshire (rail has a circa 90% mode share of the rail/air market from Leeds to London for example), the Heathrow route in particular was important as an inter-lining hub for long haul business and leisure travel. A fast high speed rail link from West Yorkshire to

London Heathrow would enable “inter-lining” again via Heathrow, but via a lower carbon mode.

The greatest benefits will be had by the national high speed rail network delivering the shortest journey times possible and this means running at the highest possible speeds and few station stops. Specifying the high speed rail network to allow through running onto the existing classic network increases the benefits and spreads these over a greater area. It is a fundamental part of the high speed rail strategy. The principles of HS2 providing access to Heathrow and a link with HS1 to enable the potential for through running to the Continent via the Channel Tunnel a