

Live Wires

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High Speed 2 to Manchester

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Introduction

Readers may remember the many weekends of blockades and rail replacement buses during the West Coast Modernisation Project. This gave some speed and capacity increases with the tilting Pendolino trains. However a side effect of the *very high frequency* long distance services has been the crowding out of some local services and preventing additional new services.

The Department for Transport's February 2011 Consultation *High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future* says:-

"Britain's rail network is seeing a continuing pattern of steeply rising demand. As a result, rail capacity is under increasing strain and services are growing more crowded.

Between 1994/95 and 2009/10, total passenger miles travelled rose from 18 billion to almost 32 billion. The fastest growth of all has been in demand for long distance travel, which continued to rise even through the recent recession. The total number of long distance journeys made more than doubled in the period from 1994/95 to 2009/10.

As capacity on the network becomes ever more intensively used, the scope to meet rising demand by running additional services and longer trains is becoming increasingly limited. This means that some of the country's key

rail routes are forecast to be completely full in peak hours in the next 20 years."

The selected solution is an entirely new network known as *High Speed 2* (HS2) which will be a 'Y' shaped route from London Euston to Birmingham; Manchester and the North West; East Midlands, Sheffield, Leeds and the North East. This new network will be built to a larger 'continental' loading gauge compared with the 'classic' British loading gauge. Track gauge in both cases is 1.435 metre. The infrastructure will be designed for speeds up to 400 kilometres per hour (km/h) or 250 miles per hour (mph) with a maximum operating speed of 360km/h or 225mph at opening. The network will be built in separate phases 1, 2a and 2b.

Parliament has passed the Act for Phase 1 and is now considering the Bill for Phase 2a.

Route Description

Phase 1 is from London Euston to Birmingham Interchange {located east of the *National Exhibition Centre*} and northwards to Handsacre on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) about 19 kilometres or 11.8 miles south-east of Stafford and to Birmingham Curzon station in Birmingham city centre.

Birmingham Interchange Station will have two non stop through lines in the centre and two double sided island platforms, one southbound and the other northbound.

North of Birmingham Interchange, in the Water Orton area, the Birmingham line

In this issue – Web Version March 2019:

High Speed 2 to Manchester Local Rail and Metrolink News Severn Valley coach trip Archive Photo: Royal Tram 1992 Notice Board including General Data Protection Regulation

branches off to the west; the main line continues north towards Manchester; there will also be a west to north chord making a high speed triangular junction. North of this the East Midlands, Yorkshire and North East line leaves the line towards the North West.

Birmingham Curzon, the city centre station, will have six terminal platforms; its main pedestrian entrance will be on Moor Street Queensway adjacent to Moor Street Station. There will be another entrance about half way along its length near the remains of the 1830s *London and Birmingham Railway* station.

Phase 2a is from Streethay {east of Lichfield} to a little south of Crewe, where spurs will connect to the WCML.

Phase 2b west starts at the northern end of phase 2a and goes through twin tunnels under Crewe emerging north of the town on the east side of the WCML. After passing just to the east of Lostock Gralam and crossing over the M6 is the junction for Manchester. The HS2 main line continues north and joins the WCML just south of the A58 road at Bamfurlong. The Manchester branch passes between Rostherne Mere and the M56. It crosses under the M56 near Warburton Green and just south of M56 junction 6. Manchester Airport High Speed Station will be just to the west of the M56 south of its junction 5. From Manchester Airport High Speed Station the route is in twin tunnels under south Manchester emerging at Ardwick and rising to run on a viaduct to the High Speed station alongside Manchester Piccadilly.

HS2 Phase 2b east will have a high speed station at Toton between Derby and Nottingham. Connecting spurs near Chesterfield will join the Midland Main Line enabling services to the present Sheffield station. There will be a branch to a High Speed station at Leeds and the eastern branch will join the East Coast Main Line south of York.

Euston Station

The present station was built for the 1960s electrification of the WCML. It totally replaced the earlier station which had grown piecemeal since first opened by the *London and*

Birmingham Railway.

Today Melton Street is the station boundary. The high speed station will extend westwards as far as Cobour Street, which will be realigned and extended northward. When fully complete the high speed station will consist of 11 subsurface high speed platforms at around 4 metres below the level of the existing conventional railway.

High speed station construction will be in two stages. Stage A from 2017 to the end of 2026 will see works in the station approach and the western part of the high speed station. The conventional station will operate with a minimum of 16 platforms. HS2 Phase One operation will start from six new high speed platforms at the end of 2026. Then the conventional station will be reduced to a minimum of 11 platforms. Stage B1, until 2033, will see construction of an additional five high speed platforms and the remainder of the high speed station facilities will be completed. These works will be west of and at a lower level than the Down Fast conventional line.

The Euston Tunnel Portals are just south of Parkway (A4201). These tunnels carry the High Speed Lines to Old Oak Common. There a station will allow interchange with CrossRail and services on the lines from Paddington.

Depots

Phase 1 Calvert Infrastructure Maintenance Depot will be located where HS2 passes under the Bicester to Bletchley railway line.

Phase 1 Washwood Heath Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot will be alongside and south of the Birmingham and Derby conventional line.

Phase 2a Infrastructure Maintenance Depot will take over the construction depot site located where HS2 crosses the Stafford to Stone conventional line.

Phase 2b Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot will be between the WCML and the HS2 Mainline north of Crewe. This site will serve Manchester and allow access to the WCML, for trains terminating at Liverpool and Preston.

Manchester Airport High Speed Station

Two outer through lines would enable HS2 trains to run at maximum speed whilst the two inner stopping lines would enable trains to stop and serve the Manchester Airport High Speed station via an island platform. The platform would be 415m long by 14m wide, in a cutting approximately 8.5m below existing ground level.

HS2 concourse facilities would be located at ground level above the platforms. The concourse main entrance would be located on the eastern, airport facing, side of the station. The route between concourse and platforms would be via stairs, escalators and lifts through the concourse.

A linear forecourt arrangement would run along the full length of the eastern side of the station. Multi-storey car parks would be provided to the east of the route, to the north and south of the station forecourt. These car parks would accommodate a total of 3,000 cars.

Manchester Piccadilly

On 8 March 2018 the Strategic Regeneration Framework was published. This updates the 2014 version. It shows the desired arrangement of conventional, high speed, Metrolink and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) platforms.

The SRF proposes removal of Gateway House and the existing approach ramp. A new Boulevard would be constructed from Piccadilly / London Road / Ducie Street junction which would run along the north-eastern edge of the combined station to the Mancunian Way. Also a new civic station forecourt between the north western end of the high speed platforms and Piccadilly / London Road / Ducie Street junction will be the city centre facing entrance.

Four high speed platforms, two single sided and one double sided, will be aligned north-west south-east on a new structure; separated from the similarly aligned conventional platforms.

An internal street between new and existing stations will provide a top-lit

connection; offering a space for waiting, sitting and meeting people. The brick built undercroft will be renovated and brought into public use for the first time; housing a generous retail provision.

The Piccadilly Station Metrolink stop is proposed to be relocated and expanded; it will have four platforms accessed from the shared concourse and located below ground level, under the high speed platforms.

Potential future expansion of the Metrolink network is accommodated by the proposals for both a new line between Market Street and Piccadilly Station (which would alleviate capacity constraints at Piccadilly Gardens) as well as east towards Ashbury as part of the wider Tram-Train proposals.

A part of the proposed Northern Hub works would add, to the south of the station, two new through platforms 15 and 16. These would increase capacity on the Manchester South Junction line; which has the Ordsall Chord at its western end giving a direct link to Victoria station.

The High Speed lines are high enough to cross over the A635 Mancunian Way. Going southward they are descending and will require significant alterations to the local road network.

Manchester HS2 northern tunnel portals are on the Ardwick train care depot site whose layout will have to be re-arranged.

The Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) lines junction will be in the cutting, with the NPR tracks continuing northward in tunnels to the new low level NPR platforms at Piccadilly.

High Speed 2 Trains

Two types of high speed trains will eventually run on HS2. The first to be ordered will be 'classic compatible', able to run on lines built to the British loading gauge at conventional speeds and up to 360km/h on the new high speed line.

For the completion of the phase 2b lines between Euston, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds high speed stations; built to the larger 'continental' loading gauge; further trains are required and these will be 'captive'-only able run on these new lines.

Local Rail and Metrolink News

by Andrew Macfarlane

Ordsall Chord

This opened with the timetable change on Sunday 10th December. Initially it is only being used by six trains each way per day between Leeds and Manchester Oxford Road via Bradford and Manchester Victoria (hourly on Sundays). This service is due to be extended to run to and from Manchester Airport from December 2018.

From May 2018 the hourly Manchester Airport to Newcastle and Middlesbrough TransPennine Express services will be diverted to run via Oxford Road, the Ordsall Chord and Manchester Victoria. This will reduce crossing moves across the Piccadilly "throat". The Liverpool-Scarborough service is diverted to run via Manchester Victoria from May 2018 so will no longer cross the whole layout from one side to the other at Ardwick Junction. Both of these changes will release paths for the planned additional Northern trains from Piccadilly to Greenbank, Macclesfield and New Mills Newtown. The introduction of the additional trains to Greenbank and Macclesfield has now been deferred to December 2018.

Other Rail News

On 5th December 2017 a memorial planter in memory of **Martyn Hett** was installed on platform 4 at Altrincham; it was visited by his family on 6th December. The planter has its own lighting. **Martyn Hett**, one of the victims of the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena on 22nd May, was a regular commuter on the train between Stockport and Altrincham.

On 24th December the Government said no to TfGM's request to take over all rail stations in their area. In a surprise move, Arriva announced in October that they were pulling out of the bidding for the new Wales franchise. The service between Manchester Victoria and Blackburn via Bolton was increased to half-hourly from the December 2017 timetable change following the lengthening of the passing loop at Darwen.

On 11th January it was announced that the completion of the Manchester-Bolton-Preston electrification had been delayed until December 2018 (it had been due to be

completed by May 2018). Northern have said that this will have implications for the planned May 2018 timetable changes because of the need to continue using diesel trains on that line. They are now talking about a phased introduction of the changes, which also include much-improved Sunday services on many lines.

Saphos Trains

Members may have read about the new company Saphos Trains which has been set up by millionaire Jeremy Hosking to run steam-hauled charter trains out of Crewe. As an introductory offer, the company is offering half-price fares (typically £45 in standard class) on its 2018 tours to destinations such as Holyhead, Cardiff via the Welsh Marches and Stratford upon Avon. Full details can be found on their website <http://saphostrains.com/> or by phoning 0800 038 5320. As of 4th February, six of the twelve trains were showing on their website as being fully booked.

Tornado

On Wednesday 1st August 60163 Tornado will travel through Altrincham when it hauls its tenth anniversary train "The Mad Hatter" returning from Chester to Darlington via Northwich, Altrincham, Cheadle Heath, Hazel Grove and the Hope Valley line to Sheffield. The train will leave Chester at around 16.30. Final timings will be on www.uksteam.info nearer the time.

Metrolink

The new electrical substation at Brooklands was commissioned in November 2017, enabling more double trams to run on the Altrincham line. Two of the trams on the Altrincham-Piccadilly service are now doubles (as well as all of the Altrincham-Bury services). A shame it's not more than two!

A new timetable started on Sunday 28th January. The Bury-Altrincham service was given a 10-minute layover at Altrincham to improve timekeeping. Since 29th January this service has used platform 2 at Altrincham and the Altrincham-Piccadilly service (as it became) uses platform 1. *continued p5*

Local Rail and Metrolink News continued

Sunday services now operate until 23.30 (an hour later than previously), a very welcome move. Also all trams now run to and from the depots in service and the Metrolink service from Manchester Airport has been extended to Manchester Victoria via Market Street. The MediaCity service now runs through to Etihad Campus.

Society Coach Trip to the Severn Valley Railway

by Andrew Macfarlane

A total of 37 passengers boarded our Selwyns coach to Bridgnorth on Saturday 17th June. The trip was blessed with fine weather (if anything it was perhaps a little bit too hot). We made our way to the Severn Valley Railway via the A49, our only slight mistake being to turn right approaching Bridgnorth station slightly too early and ending up round the back of the station by the engine shed!

Luckily passengers were able to cross the line on the level to reach our train, the 10.50 from Bridgnorth headed by rebuilt "Battle of Britain" class no. 34053 *Sir Keith Park*. We saw the work going on to improve facilities for passengers at Bridgnorth with the foundations visible for new buildings to the south of the original station building on the main southbound platform.

Some passengers alighted at Highley to visit the Engine House (admission was included in the fare) while others continued on to Bewdley or Kidderminster. There is now quite a collection of preserved diesels at

Kidderminster, in particular class 50s.

The group I was with chose to have a quick bite in the pub at Kidderminster before we caught a train of LNER stock hauled by diesel D1062 *Western Courier* to Bewdley. Members of the Western Locomotive Association were going down the train collecting donations in a bucket.

After exploring the lovely riverside town of Bewdley we caught a train hauled by Great Western 0-6-0 pannier tank 7714 to Arley and then the last train back to Bridgnorth. We returned home via the A49 with a short stop en route to open the roof vent in the coach! The trip made a small profit for the Society.

We are planning to run a coach trip in summer 2018.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, whose new extension to Broadway opens in March 2018, is now confirmed as the destination for our coach trip on Saturday 26th May. A booking form is enclosed with this issue of Live Wires.



Picture from the AERPS archive, probably taken in 2007

Royal Tram 17th

July 1992

Flying the Royal Standard on the ramp alongside G–Mex (now called Manchester Central).

After formally opening Metrolink, the Queen travelled on this tram from St Peter's Square to Bury.

Photo – Andrew Macfarlane



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To ensure compliance with the GDPR; Committee Member details, the out of date Lectures Series information and some other items have been removed from this web version.

AERPS video

Saving Electric Trains to Manchester

by Nick Dodson is on YouTube at https://youtu.be/Vb4h_56QtC8

It tells the story of the saving of two historic electric train carriages from the Manchester South Junction & Altrincham Railway. (Length 10 minutes 49 seconds)

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AERPS Web Site

Our web site is at www.altrinchamelectric.org.uk. The Home page has a brief introduction to the Society and update alerts. Other pages are Coaches, Excursions, Lectures, Membership, MSJ&AR (the line and its history) and Photo Gallery (pictures of the line).

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