

Long Term Rail Strategy Consultation Summary Report

March 2014

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Foreword

The Long Term Rail Strategy sets the framework for how rail in the North of England should be developed over the next twenty years. It is a long term development plan for the North's passenger and freight railway. The Long Term Rail Strategy has been developed by Rail North, a coming together of all the North's Local Transport Authorities.

The Strategy is underpinned by a Vision, which is to grow rail through providing a better connected network, a more coherent network, greater capacity for both passengers and freight, with all this delivered in a more cost effective manner. The Vision is that we should strive to achieve a doubling in rail modal share over the next 20 years through addressing gaps and deficiencies in the current rail provision. The Strategy takes an evidence-led approach to define a set of conditional outputs which should be addressed through rail and other planning processes.

A consultation on a draft Strategy was held between July and October 2013. A website at www.railstrategynorth.com was established to host the consultation documents, with a facility to submit online responses. Local Transport Authorities, the rail industry and other organisations were contacted to raise awareness of the Strategy and the consultation. A number of presentations and meetings were held with interested parties and two articles about the draft Strategy appeared in the rail media.

In total, 111 responses were received from individuals and organisations during the consultation process. The organisations which responded are listed at Appendix 1.

These responses have been considered and the Strategy has been refined accordingly. An important principle in any consultation exercise is that the subject of the consultation should only be revised in response to the responses received to the consultation.

In the main, the draft Strategy was supported by the consultees. The focus in redrafting the Strategy has been on refinement and points of detail. From the consultation, it was clear that consultees did not consider wholesale redrafting or restructuring as required. While the focus here is on those responses that suggested amendment, this focus should not distract from the high level of support that the Strategy has received.

This report summarises the responses to the consultation on the draft Strategy and sets out how the draft has been developed to reflect these.

Executive Summary

Key findings

In the main, the draft Strategy was supported by consultees. The focus in redrafting the Strategy has therefore been on refinement and points of detail. Wholesale redrafting and restructuring has not been required.

This said, some amendment has been made in response to four key themes that emerged from the responses to the Consultation:

- What is the role of rail?
- What Outputs need to be delivered over the next 20 years? 'Outputs' are the characteristics of the rail service in terms of its connectivity, quality, punctuality etc.
- What are the main Inputs that rail needs? 'Inputs' are things such as infrastructure, rolling stock etc.
- How does the rail Strategy fit in a wider policy agenda?

The specific areas where the consultation draft Strategy has been revised are:

1. Route re-openings/reinstatements/new stations: greater clarity has been provided that any such proposals need to have an economic and financial rationale and that the development of this should be led at a Local Transport Authority level.
2. Low Use Stations and Services: the draft Strategy highlighted that there are a number of stations and services in the North that are not well used and which incur significant cost to operate and suggested that the future of these should be considered. The revised Strategy offers greater clarity on the position on such stations and services including the need to consider the reasons for low use, potential future use, provision of alternatives, impacts of and changes to provision, etc.
3. Named Centres: when considering connectivity the Strategy focuses on the five largest cities in the North and a matrix of larger urban centres. Some consultees have suggested additional centres be included in the matrix. The case for these has been considered and amendments made.
4. Freight: a number of consultees have said that the Strategy gives insufficient consideration of freight. On the other hand, other respondents – notably those from the rail freight industry – suggested more modest amendments to the Strategy's outputs. The Strategy's position on freight has been reviewed.
5. HS2: respondents stated that the delivery of the Strategy's outputs should not be dependent on HS2. While the Strategy should recognise the benefits of HS2 for

the North and discuss how these will be maximised, it also needs to secure benefits for places not directly served by HS2.

6. Implementation: some respondents asked that the Strategy be clearer on how its recommendations will be taken forward and how they fit with rail industry and local planning processes.

The responses

An important principle in all consultation exercises is that the subject of the consultation should only be revised in response to the consultation. To maintain the credibility of the consultation exercise and ultimately the Strategy itself, the Strategy has only been redrafted in response to the comments received.

In the main, the draft Strategy was supported by the consultees. The focus in redrafting the Strategy has therefore been on refinement and points of detail. Wholesale redrafting and restructuring has not been required. While the focus in this report is on those responses that suggested amendment, this focus should not distract from the high level of support that the Strategy has received.

There are four key themes emerging from the responses to consider in developing the final Strategy:

- What is the role of rail?
- What Outputs does rail need to deliver over the next 20 years?
- What are the main Inputs that rail needs?
- How does the rail strategy fit in a wider agenda?

The role of rail

Several responses felt that the Vision is not sufficiently ambitious. Whilst the Strategy should be ambitious and aspirational, it does however need to be grounded on realistic assumptions of what is feasible and the likely level of funds available in the future. While it appears questionable whether the Strategy can be more ambitious than it is now, the opportunity has been taken to improve how this ambition is expressed.

While the Strategy is rooted in supporting economic growth a number of consultees suggested greater weight be given to other outcomes that rail can support.

In particular, a number of respondents noted that rail can be an environmentally sustainable mode of travel, particularly compared to private car trips. Growing rail's modal share will help to promote more sustainable economic growth and can help the development of sustainable communities. This can be enhanced by more use of smart ticketing, greater integration with other modes of travel, and with other policies such as parking and land use. In addition, electrification and technological advances should help to reduce rail's own carbon impacts.

Also, across the North rail plays an important social role through connecting communities. It has a role to address deprivation. It can link areas to opportunities, and connect areas of population growth to areas of employment growth. Education travel is a significant contributor to rail travel, and the growth in the student population has placed new demands on rail travel. Rail also plays a role in providing access to healthcare. The Community Rail approach has been introduced successfully in a number of locations in the North, both in terms of designated lines and also station based schemes. Stations are community assets which can be developed as community hubs, placing rail at the heart of local communities and generating new travel opportunities.

What outputs does rail need to deliver?

In terms of outputs, a common theme from consultees is to improve the quality of the rail offer, in particular the quality of rolling stock operating in the North. The North was felt to have a concentration of older and unattractive trains, particularly the Class 142 and 144 pacer fleets built in the 1980s. These trains were felt to be unattractive and uncomfortable and do not meet contemporary expectations from a modern transport operation. There was a strong view from respondents that these fleets should be replaced irrespective of the need to provide accessible trains by the end of 2019 or meet emissions standards.

Many responses felt that the current fare regime is not fit for purpose and should be overhauled. Common themes were the need to avoid cross-boundary effects, having single fares which are half the return, and better integration with other modes of travel. It was recognised that advance and other promotional fares play a useful role in maximising off peak revenue.

A further theme is the need to provide better services, particularly early in the morning, in the post-peak evenings and on Sundays. As the economy changes, rail also needs to change. Many people work on Sundays and there are still examples where no rail service at all is provided in the morning. The growth of the evening economy needs to be matched by rail provision. In some cases it is not possible to reach main centres until 07.30 on any day.

The concept of a connected network as set out in the Strategy attracted a lot of support, although there are some views about whether the list of main urban centres is sufficiently comprehensive.

What are the main inputs that rail needs?

Several responses called for the Strategy to take a more pro-active position on line re-opening or reinstating routes, or on providing passenger services on freight only lines. However, the Strategy is expressed in terms of outputs, not inputs. As well as there being a strategic case for such proposals (they need to be the best way of delivering the defined outputs), they also need to have an economic and financial rationale and in

many cases a convincing or contemporary rationale is lacking. The development of this should be at a Local Transport Authority level.

The Strategy's suggestion that the role of lightly used stations and services should be examined generated several comments. Again greater clarity of the position has been provided and in particular the need to understand what the circumstances are – why are stations and services not well used. In some cases it may be because the service pattern is deficient, or because land use patterns have changed or other reasons. Generalising can be misleading.

As well as seeking to expand the rail network, several responses expressed that the Strategy should be more ambitious in seeking to develop the existing rail network. The Strategy does propose a candidate vision of an electrified network which is both more extensive than is currently committed and is comprehensive, though there were some suggestions for extensions, although it is recognised that this needs to be subject to business case development. Respondents also put forward other improvements such as addressing key bottlenecks and faster journeys. The Strategy puts forward journey time targets for links between main cities, as well as a number of other outputs. It will be for the rail industry working with Local Transport Authorities and LEPs from across the North to identify how best to meet these outputs in a way that offers value for money and is affordable.

While respondents agreed that the Strategy should set out what the North's rail network should look like in 20 years' time, and what needs to be done to achieve this, it was felt that the Strategy should not be reliant on HS2 or other developments. It should, however, recognise that Government is advancing its proposals and seek to complement HS2. Some areas of the North will not be served by HS2 and respondents identified that the continued development of rail provision in these areas is particularly important. This includes the role that the current long distance routes from London to the North play both before and after HS2 is introduced.

How does the rail strategy fit in a wider agenda?

The Long Term Rail Strategy has always been envisaged as part of a 'policies and principles hierarchy', where outputs are specified at pan-Northern level, and specific interventions are set out in local rail strategies and delivery plans. For this reason, the Strategy does not name specific interventions and schemes. Consideration of the consultation responses suggest greater clarity is warranted on how the Strategy is taken forward and how the conditional outputs defined informed interventions taken forward by the rail industry. The developing role of Local Enterprise Partnerships and other changes in transport governance is relevant to the implementation of the Strategy. These will be important delivery bodies for the Strategy, for example through the Strategic Economic Plans that are now being developed.

As well as informing local rail plans, the link between the Strategy and the national rail planning process is important. Key interfaces are the Network Rail Long Term Planning

Process and the preparation for the next High Level Output Specification which is due to be published in 2017.

The Strategy was initiated at the same time as work to look at possible devolution of franchised rail services in the North. However, the Strategy is separate from devolution in that it defines the North's vision for rail over the next 20 years and how that may be achieved. The relationship with national rail planning is therefore of fundamental importance as is the role of local rail planning done at sub-regional and local levels.

The Consultation

This Consultation Report presents the findings from the consultation process held between July and October 2013. It also sets out what amendments have been made to the final Strategy as a result.

The responses

Written responses from 111 organisations or people were received and all have been read, summarised and analysed.

Type of respondents

Many different types of stakeholders and organisations responded and gave feedback, as shown in Table 1 below. The full list of respondents is included in Appendix A.

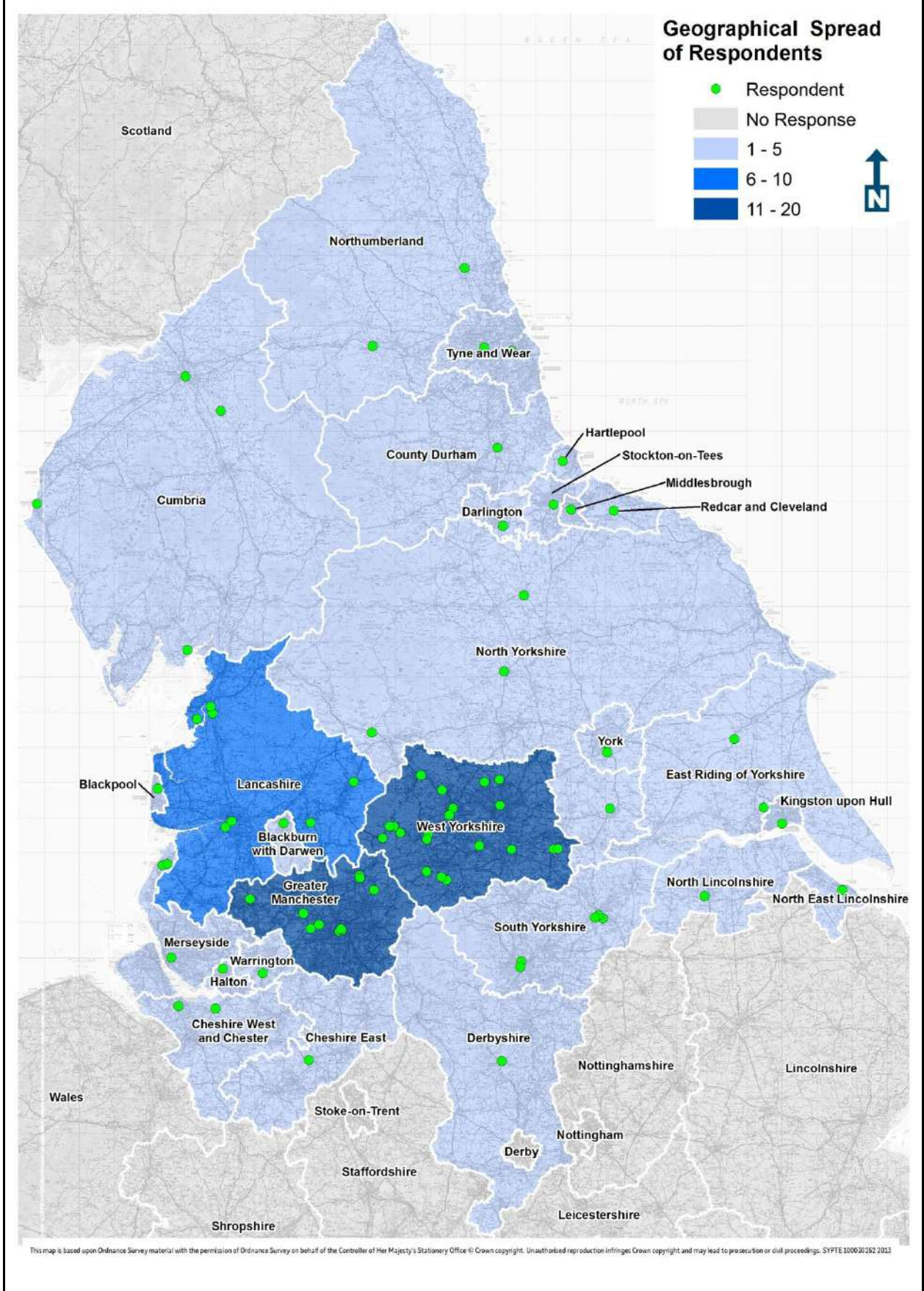
Table 1: Number of written responses by organisational type	
Organisation Type	Number
Individuals	16
Local Groups	35
Local Transport Authority*	16 responses representing all 33 LTAs in the North
National Groups	7
Other Public Sector	8
Others	23
Rail Industry	6

* Some Local Transport Authorities provided comments in conjunction with neighbouring LTAs, Associations of Local Authorities, Local Economic Partnerships or Local Transport Bodies.

Geographic location of respondents

Figure 1 shows the geographic location of respondents, based on those respondents who provided their postcode. Not shown on the map are a number of the responses of national bodies. The consultation achieved a spread of responses from all areas across the North.

Figure 1: Geographic spread of respondents



Summary of key issues raised

Table 2 shows the number of responses received for each of the 27 questions in the consultation.

Table 2: Responses received to consultation										
Question Number		No Response	Yes	No	Neither Yes/ No	Supports approach	Supports approach with some modification	Moderate disagreement	Strong disagreement	Other suggestions and comments made
1	Do you agree the priorities are correct?	18	84	7	2					
2	Are there other priorities?	60								51
3	Is the vision ambitious enough?	43				34	24	4	6	
4	Is the relationship between economic growth and rail correct?	28	72	6	4					
5	Are there other economic factors that need to be considered?	60								51
6	Do you agree with the analysis of the North's rail provision?	29	64	9	8					
7	Are there other rail provision issues that are important?	53								58
8	Is the balance between passenger and freight appropriate?	58				29	17	5	2	
9	Are the strategic gaps identified correctly?	37	65	5	3					
10	Are there any strategic gaps missing?	60								51
11	Are there any long term geographic issues?	43								68
12	Have the right set of outputs been identified to deliver the Strategy?	42	53	12	3					
13	Are there any other outputs that need to be considered?	75								36
14	Is the focus on connectivity correct?	35	52	16	8					
15	Are there other priorities for assessment and output?	58								53
16	How important is electrification?	35				59	14	2	1	
17	Should the focus be on quality of service, irrespective of traction?	48	55	5	3					

Table 2: Responses received to consultation										
Question Number		No Response	Yes	No	Neither Yes/ No	Supports approach	Supports approach with some modification	Moderate disagreement	Strong disagreement	Other suggestions and comments made
18	Is there sufficient consideration of freight?	48	28	18	15					
19	Is the focus on service categories appropriate?	50	47	4	10					
20	What needs to happen to make this a reality?	66								45
21	Is the strategic programme the right one?	56	51	0	4					
22	Are the right issues allocated to the right time periods?	65				23	18	3	1	1
23	Does the strategic programme balance passenger and freight?	61				32	12	4	2	
24	Are the right delivery agencies and potential funders identified?	63	37	7	4					
25	Which other delivery agencies and funders should be referenced?	84								27
26	Is the current fares regime fit for purpose?	55	7	43	6					
27	What changes could be made to the current fares regime?	57								54
28	Any other comments?	66								45

Not every respondent answered all the questions. Where specific issues were raised that were not related to any of the 27 questions, these were recorded in the database and reported as answers for question 28.

The questions that drew the highest interest were Question 1, which sought comments on the selection of the 5 priority areas of the Strategy, and Question 10, relating to specific geographic issues which should be highlighted for the longer term.

The key responses to the Consultation are summarised in the next section. The responses are grouped according to each question. Due to the similarity between some questions, there are occasions when individual questions have been merged together.

Summary of Responses Question by Question

Question 1a and Question 1b

The five priorities of the Long Term Rail Strategy are:

Better connectivity

Better customer experience

Efficiency

Being locally responsive

Deriving full value from planned investments

Do you agree that these are the correct priorities (Q1A)? and;

Are there any other priorities that are important (Q1B)?

There were a total of 93 responses to question 1 (A and B). Of these, 84 were in broad agreement that the priorities of the Long Term Rail Strategy were appropriate. Despite the general acknowledgement that the priorities were appropriate, a number of respondents noted that further clarification of the definitions of the priorities needs to be undertaken. For example, on a number of occasions it was noted that connectivity should refer to the whole journey (to and from the station), and 'better customer experience' needs greater elaboration. Consideration should be given to current and future passenger needs. Also, given the economic benefits from an efficient transport network, it was suggested by some that sustainable economic growth and regeneration should feature more prominently throughout the Strategy.

Many respondents suggested alternative or additional priorities that should be included. A number of respondents felt that the environmental impacts of the Strategy have not been given sufficient emphasis. An efficient railway network can help reduce private car use and in turn, improve local and regional air quality as well as reducing the carbon footprint of the transport sector as a whole. This also includes the replacement of existing outdated and inefficient rolling stock with more environmentally friendly modern vehicles including electric trains. However, there was a feeling that considerations of cost effectiveness cannot be ignored.

Better integration between other modes was also raised by some respondents. This includes adequate provision of car parking, taxis and buses. Poor integration between rail services (both within the same and between different operators) was also noted. Better integration also includes the need for better active travel facilities, such as, secure cycle parking and improvements to pedestrian facilities around the stations (including disabled access). The role of stations as gateways to the communities they

serve was highlighted, emphasising the need for the physical linkages between the stations and the places they serve to be clear, convenient and attractive.

The need for improvements to capacity and capability of the network was raised as a key priority by some as congestion of the network around key destinations and junctions causes delay to service punctuality and reliability. From a passenger perspective, it was suggested by some that priorities should be focused on ensuring the more popular routes are allowed to expand, with additional services and higher capacity rolling stock. In contrast, others placed greater weight on the suggestion to re-open or reinstate closed facilities and lines.

The social elements of train travel were also highlighted as a priority and some respondents commented that these have not been sufficiently considered in the Strategy. Comments suggested that the Strategy should emphasise the benefits of connectivity from a social perspective, providing accessibility to employment, training and leisure activities. Social accessibility includes improvements to facilities for disabled people with the enhancement of infrastructure and information technology to ensure an inclusive transport network, mindful of demographic changes such as the ageing population.

Freight was mentioned by a number of respondents. These suggested that the priorities of the Strategy seemed to be focused on raising passenger demand and making the network more conducive to increasing patronage in passenger traffic. It was argued that the priorities should also consider the importance of rail freight as an efficient tool for improving the economy. Freight therefore needs to be seamlessly integrated into the network and any increase in passenger services should be accommodated in a way that does not obstruct growth in the rail freight market.

While the Strategy remains rooted in supporting the economic growth of the North and how rail can support and facilitate this, throughout the Strategy greater emphasis has been given to the social role that rail plays, as well as its inherent environmental advantages over alternative transport modes, be it the car for personal travel or road haulage for freight.

Question 2

Recognising that it has to be achievable, is the Vision for rail in the North sufficiently ambitious?

Of the 111 responses, 68 gave feedback regarding the level of support for the ambition of the vision of the Strategy: 34 of the respondents were supportive of the approach in its current form, 24 supported the approach with some modification, 4 moderately disagreed, while 6 respondents strongly disagreed.

The comments in support of the approach noted that there are limitations within the existing legislation as to what can be achieved. However, the focus of the vision is in line with the priorities and underpins the objectives of the Strategy. A number of respondents noted that the plan may be too ambitious. However, contradicting this point, some respondents have also commented that the plan should be more ambitious.

A number of respondents commented that the vision needs to recognise the complexity of the North's economic geography. Sub-regional towns play a significant role within their respective city regions and the vision should have a greater ambition in growing the rail network in areas that are currently constrained through poor connectivity (service frequency and integration).

From the comments that disagreed with the vision, it is clear that these respondents felt that the ambition is not strong enough. These respondents argued that the vision should place rail at the heart of the sustainable economic development of the North and the investment required in the rail network should be reinforced throughout the Strategy.

The vision and the Strategy that flows from this should be ambitious and aspirational. It does, however, need to be grounded on realistic assumptions of what is feasible and the likely level of funds available in the future. It is questionable whether the vision and Strategy can be more ambitious than it is now. The opportunity has been taken to improve how this ambition is expressed.

Question 3

Do you agree that the relationship between economic growth and rail is correct?

Of the 83 responses to this question, 72 agreed that the relationship between economic growth and rail is correct within the Strategy. However, there were a number of comments which requested that the relationship between rail connectivity and the economy is strengthened.

South Yorkshire ITA suggested that given the size of the North and the varying levels of economic output between the city regions, the Strategy should provide a 'place' dimension within this chapter to help identify where this relationship should be made stronger. This should also identify where significant new development and regeneration will take place as a way to help plan for the future and ensure that investment in the North's railway is focused on over the next 20 years. Another respondent noted that given the need to demonstrate the best value for money, economic outputs need to be considered when prioritising where investment in the network should be focused.

A number of respondents argue that there needs to be greater focus on the east-west and cross country routes, including links to Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield. It is suggested that there should also be a focus on secondary centres as a focus for growth, for example, Hull is in a good position as one of the largest second tier centres

and the Humber is a very significant international gateway as UK's busiest port complex.

A number of respondents have highlighted that the Strategy needs to make the links between areas of deprivation and poor rail provision. They identify that rail access can have significant impacts on economic activity as new connections to labour markets can increase local area productivity and regeneration. Included within this is the acknowledgement that education travel should be catered for as access to education and training is of paramount importance and the North's 26 Universities are a significant generator of rail demand. Where there are proposals to increase housing or employment opportunities near train stations, the impact of this development should be understood as early as possible to ensure that the appropriate level of rail provision is available.

The economic and social context presented in Chapter 3 of the Strategy document can only ever be an overview of the North – an area that accounts for a quarter of the national economy. Most respondents who responded to this question indicated that they were content with the Consultation Draft and that it captured the key issues, so while some amendments have been made for clarification, Chapter 3 is substantively unchanged.

Question 4

Are there any other factors that need to be considered?

There were a total of 51 suggestions for other factors that need to be considered within the economic and social context. A number of respondents have suggested that there needs to be recognition of the link between investment, economic output and successful funding bids. The economic growth benefits of rail investment have been central to a number of Regional Growth Point and Major Scheme funding bids across the North and this has enabled both service enhancement and infrastructure improvements.

A further comment was that the Strategy should take into account and emphasise findings of the Community Rail Development Strategy and place greater recognition of the role that Community Rail Partnerships (CRP) can play in economic and social regeneration. There were also a number of comments suggesting that the Strategy is not people-focussed or passenger-focussed enough and gives insufficient consideration to social issues such as demographics, skills, access to a wider labour market and quality of life. Demographic issues highlighted included shifts in population between places, ageing populations and changes in family structures. It was suggested the Strategy needs to consider what the impacts of these are on rail provision and how it will be delivered. There needs to be clear acknowledgement of the social role of the railway and the wider economic impacts.

A number of respondents commented that there needs to be more consideration towards the economic benefits of increasing the volume of rail freight. These

respondents highlighted that adding capacity for freight services on the rail network can have significant benefits in relation to the smoother operation of motorways and more efficient transfer of goods. There was also an acknowledgment of the environmental benefits as freight movements have a lower associated carbon footprint.

There were a number of comments that requested a greater emphasis shown towards the leisure and tourism aspect. The comments were focused around the Strategy's lack of acknowledgement of the travel demand and impacts associated with tourist railways; and the connections that a good railway network can play in promoting leisure activities. This is particularly important in coastal and rural areas.

The need for a more integrated approach to land use planning and rail planning was highlighted by some as an area that required more development. The use of land (often brownfield) around stations should be utilised as much as possible as this can help promote higher patronage on the network and encourage sustainable travel behaviour. The vision of the Strategy should acknowledge the improvements in rail and how this may impact on land use, through unlocking future sites and creating opportunity for higher density development.

The broad range of these comments has been considered when finalising the gaps that are the subject of Chapter 5 of the Strategy document. In particular, in Chapter 5 greater weight has now been given to rail's role in the more rural areas of the North, its social role and how it does and can support the visitor and leisure economy.

Question 5

Do you agree with the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the North's rail provision?

The majority of respondents (64 out of 82) agreed with the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the North's rail provision. Of the 18 respondents that did not agree, the main comments were location specific issues where it was felt that a true picture of the strengths and weaknesses was not represented.

There were a number of comments on the need to address the immediate shortcomings of some of the rolling stock used in the North. Comments were focused on the modernisation/replacement of the existing vehicle fleet as this can help alleviate peak period capacity constraints and contribute towards environmental benefits.

The Association of North East Councils (ANEC) suggested that the Strategy should be more rigorous in the examination of the possible negative impact of High Speed Rail (HS2) on specific locations. They commented that it is essential the East Coast Main Line is developed independently of the delivery of HS2, and that the Strategy recommends additional investment is made in areas outside the HS2 'envelope' so that improvements happen before HS2 is delivered rather than after.

With regard to this question, most respondents indicated that they were content with the Consultation Draft, so while some amendments have been made for clarification, Chapter 4 is substantively unchanged.

Broader comments that relate to the Gap Analysis and the Strategy's Outputs have been reflected in revised Chapters 5 and 6.

Question 6

Are there any other issues that are important?

There were a total of 51 suggestions to this question, however it should be noted that a number of respondents answered this question in a similar way to Q4. The main concern which was raised is that the quality of stations and rolling stock needs to be improved. The old and unattractive rolling stock and the facilities at stations are significant concerns for rail users and interest groups.

Revenue protection was mentioned as a weakness and many respondents felt that the Strategy should highlight this as an area for improvement. These comments referred to the lack of "staffed" stations where tickets cannot be purchased and the need to have staff available on the train to prevent 'fareless' journeys. There was also reference to the lack of visible staff and the security perceptions this creates for passengers. The Strategy should be highlighting safety and security as an area of improvement, it was argued.

Fare variations and lack of ticketing integration between other modes of transport have also been detailed as weaknesses of the current rail system. A number of respondents have noted that the Strategy could identify options to control ticketing and introduce a line of specific ticketing offers that could deliver better value for money and flexibility.

Several respondents thought that the concept of a Strategy for a large geographic area was positive. The comments noted that although the North has a number of large cities and major conurbations, the focus should not be solely on the connectivity between these, and there should also be focus on how the smaller cities and towns can be more effectively connected. These comments have been reinforced with concerns from organisations in rural areas that see the Strategy as an opportunity to improve accessibility, but are concerned that it may be overly focussed on the largest cities.

Lancashire County Council highlighted a number of strengths that need reporting. The growth in patronage referred to in the Strategy has also been the catalyst for business cases to secure the introduction of new or enhanced services e.g. the upgrade of the Manchester to Blackburn via Bolton line and introduction of the new Blackburn to Manchester via Burnley/Todmorden West Curve service. Further to this, the Strategy should emphasise the role that designation of Community Rail Partnerships has played or could play in the future development of Community rail lines. It was outlined that

designation allows new ideas to be tried by taking the lines out of the normal industry processes which can either slow down or stifle the application/ introduction of new ideas.

Line speeds and slow journey times have been highlighted as key weaknesses of the current rail network and improvements to infrastructure (electrification and signalling) should be noted within the Strategy as investment opportunities to strengthen the North's rail offer.

From a freight perspective, respondents have noted the following issues that are important for the Strategy;

- Improved access to northern ports;
- Capacity for freight on the key trunk routes – West Coast Main Line, East Coast Main Line and the trans-Pennine routes;
- Increased importance of the Midland Main Line corridor for freight post-Electric Spine;
- The need to maintain access to existing and new freight terminals;
- Improved capacity at weekends and overnight particularly for the retail market;
- Further gauge enhancement particularly if northern ports are successful in establishing container business by rail; and,
- Wider network electrification including to terminals and ports.

Broader comments that relate to the Gap Analysis and the Strategy's Outputs have been reflected in revised Chapters 5 and 6.

Question 7

Is the balance between passenger and freight appropriate?

There were a total of 53 responses to this question and 29 agreed that the balance was correct. This shows the majority of the respondents generally supported the current Strategy in terms of balancing the need for passenger and freight services. There was a general consensus amongst consultees that freight and passenger services are both very significant to the railway network and neither should take prominence over the other.

A number of respondents that disagreed with Q7 felt that the Strategy underestimates the importance of rail freight and the future network should be more accommodating. A number of Local Transport Authorities suggested that without the appropriate investment, freight growth will be restricted. Existing infrastructure needs to be upgraded to meet today's demands and realise future opportunities, they argued. There also needs to be more support for freight through the land use planning system so that

appropriate land uses can be designated so that better integration between rail-road transfer and consumer markets can be realised.

A local group highlighted in their response that in order for freight to be successfully represented in the Strategy, and that the future growth of the industry is correctly predicted, there needs to be a comprehensive study of the freight impacts on the rail network. This was noted as a specific concern for the Humber ports as growth in the logistics industry will depend on a reliable and accessible rail network.

Through the consultation on this question, a number of suggestions have been made for the final Strategy: improved links to ports in the North, investment to allow larger and longer freight trains to use more of the network, electrification of freight lines and depots, more strategic rail freight interchanges and terminals and the use of city centre stations for freight at night.

While a number of respondents said that the Strategy gives insufficient consideration of freight, other respondents – notably those from the freight industry – suggested more modest amendment, in particular to the Outputs set out in Chapter 6 of the Strategy document.

The Strategy recognises the important role that rail freight plays in supporting the Northern economy and will play in the future. It seeks to support growth in both the passenger and freight sector. The Strategy's position on freight has been reviewed and it has been concluded that the balance between passenger and freight rail is appropriate. In particular, the Strategy calls for further extension of the gauge cleared network, recognises the need to cater for longer and heavier freight trains, as well as the need for additional freight paths to support the growth in demand.

Question 8 and Question 9

Are the strategic gaps identified the right ones? and,

Are there any strategic gaps missing?

Sixty five out of the 74 responses agreed that the Strategy has identified the correct strategic gaps. However, 51 respondents felt that the gaps needed strengthening.

The Strategy notes the need to realise greater efficiencies. It suggests that one way of doing this is to re-assess existing services, and that there are some stations with low demand where the current level of rail service provision is not justified. In low use stations, it was felt important to understand why stations were not well used. The reasons for this may be that the service is not adequate, that the station does not serve a large catchment area or that other modes of travel exist which provide a more attractive service. It is important to understand local circumstances. This comment was also highlighted by North Yorkshire County Council who stressed the importance of

terminology in relation to low demand stations as there can be many factors that need to be investigated to justify the low usage (future land use for example).

Cumbria County Council along with a number of other respondents highlighted that although they broadly agreed with the gaps, there needed to be recognition of the improvement of quality at many stations, specifically smaller stations. The Strategy should seek to develop stations as community hubs, building on the improved level of accessibility.

Many respondents noted that there was a gap in the need for continued investment in rolling stock. This was highlighted specifically by First Keolis Transpennine Express (FTE) as they outlined that although the FTE rolling stock is in a modern and good condition at present, the Strategy needs set out a clear rolling stock improvement strategy to ensure that continued investment is realised.

A number of Local Authorities (particularly those in the North West and the National Parks) commented that rail has an important role to play in supporting growth of the tourism sector. Improvements to connectivity, competitive fares and rolling stock that can accommodate bicycles, pushchairs and luggage could help promote leisure and tourism.

Passenger Focus highlighted that a significant gap is the need to improve the public perception of performance. They commented that punctuality reporting should be as disaggregated as possible, allowing the monitoring between stations en route rather than using a final destination target. In the long term this should help identify where network problems are and these can be used to explain poor satisfaction and provide a focus for future investment.

Reflecting the consultation responses, two additional gaps have been identified. The first of these reflects that gap between what services are currently provided by rail and the needs of the more rural communities in the North. The second reflects that the revenue potential on some routes is not being met and that this is a barrier to service development.

In addition, a number of amendments have been made to those gaps that relate to the need for a more cost-effective railway in the North, including the gap related to low demand stations (Gap 3A) and rail fares (Gap 3B).

Question 10

Are there any specific geographic issues which should be highlighted for the longer term?

Many of the comments to this question were focused on the need for infrastructure improvements in specific geographic areas. A number of respondents argued that the Strategy should specifically mention the re-opening of disused railway lines, such as,

Skipton – Colne, Leeds-Harrogate-Ripon-North Allerton, Ashington Blyth and Tyne and Hellifield – Clitheroe. There was suggestion that hubs and existing trip generators such as Leeds Bradford Airport and Media City Salford should have a direct connection to the railway network.

There were a number of comments regarding specific locations on the network and the impact these have on the patronage of certain routes. It was highlighted that a key issue that needs consideration is the roles of the West Coast Main Line, East Coast Main Line, and Midland Main Line. These are strategic national routes that serve the Rail North area and the long distance passenger market towards London. They do also provide intra-regional connectivity and are key freight arteries. Many other services use part of these routes and are subject to capacity issues and route availability, which may have an impact on other services within the area through reduced reliability and ability to provide additional improvements to local services. A key constraint cited by some respondents for some services is the capacity of the West Coast Main Line, and the interaction of local passenger services serving the nearby lines.

Merseytravel, amongst others, called for the Strategy to consider the impact of future growth and regeneration developments in addition to any infrastructure enhancement that is undertaken along the routes. The Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) proposed at Parkside, Newton-le-Willows is relevant as this will generate freight in an area of intensive passenger services.

The Hull and East Riding Rail Users' Association outlined that the risk and impact of flooding and unstable land should be considered within the Strategy. Flooding and land slips can have significant impacts on the railway network and resilience to adverse weather should be built into the network.

The Strategy sets a number of Conditional Outputs that if delivered will realise the vision and deliver substantial economic benefit to the North. It is not the role of the Strategy to identify the detail of any particular scheme or measure to realise these Conditional Outputs.

Looking first at closing the gaps related to the capability and capacity of the existing rail network, it is for the rail industry itself to identify cost-effective and affordable interventions that close the identified gaps. The franchising process and Network Rail's five yearly regulatory and funding cycle provide the mechanism for this. In Chapter 7, the Strategy document sets out a number of interventions (such as further electrification) for the industry to consider as it develops a way forward.

Several responses called for the Strategy to take a more pro-active position on line re-opening or reinstating routes, or on providing passenger services on freight only lines. To do so would be beyond the scope of a strategy of this nature. In general, as well as such proposals needing to have a compelling strategic case, they also need to have an economic and financial rationale. In many cases a convincing or contemporary rationale for proposed rail re-openings or reinstatements is lacking.

The question is then who should take a lead in the development of a case for such proposals. The position that the Strategy takes that such work should be led at a Local Transport Authority level, with Local Transport Authorities working together as necessary. Engagement of Local Enterprise Partnerships in such work appears essential. The amended Strategy sets out a potential role for Rail North in this process.

Question 11 and Question 12

Has the right set of outputs been identified to deliver the Strategy objectives?

Are there any other outputs that need to be considered?

In terms of outputs, a common theme from consultees is to improve the quality of the rail offer, in particular the quality of rolling stock operating in the North. The North was felt to have a concentration of older and unattractive trains, particularly the Class 142 and 144 pacer fleets built in the 1980s. These trains are felt to be unattractive and uncomfortable and do not meet contemporary expectations from a modern transport operation. There was a strong view that these fleets should be replaced irrespective of the need to provide accessible trains by the end of 2019 or to meet emissions standards.

As described in Question 25, 77% of responses felt that the current fare regime is not fit for purpose and should be reformed. Common themes were the need to avoid cross-boundary effects and geographic variation, having single fares which are half the return,

and better integration with other modes of travel. It was recognised that advance and other promotional fares play useful role in maximising off-peak revenue.

A further theme is the need to provide better services, particularly in the post-peak evenings and on Sundays. As the economy changes, rail also needs to change. Many people work on Sundays and there are still examples where no rail service at all is provided in the morning. The growth of the evening economy needs to be matched by rail provision. It was highlighted that on some routes with direct access it is not possible to reach main centres until after 07.30 on any day.

The concept of a connected network as set out in the Strategy attracted a lot of support, although there are some suggestions for other major centres that should be identified.

In Chapter 6 additional outputs have been defined to reflect the two additional gaps identified in Chapter 5.

Amendments have been made to the definition of the inter-connected urban matrix that defines the connectivity outputs that should be provided across the North, from the North to London and to international gateways.

Further amendments to Chapter 6 are covered in the responses to Questions 13 and 14 below.

Question 13

Is the focus on connectivity to and between key centres, to London and to international gateways right?

There is general support amongst respondents that the focus on connectivity to key centres, London and international gateways is correct. Out of the 76 responses to this question, 52 agreed with the Strategy.

Better rail connectivity between the North's largest cities was highlighted by a number of Local Authorities and Rail Groups as being very important. Improved connectivity was felt to be needed between Nottingham and Liverpool/Manchester/ Sheffield and on the York-Leeds-Manchester-Liverpool corridor. There was also recognition of the importance of 24 hour rail access to Manchester Airport so that rail access coincides with the airport's peak operating hours. However, some consultees disagreed and felt that there was too much emphasis on airports and the focus should be placed on connections to settlements.

Tees Valley Unlimited noted the importance of strategic connectivity to the Tees Valley (East Coast services at Darlington and Grand Central services to Sunderland). They also commented that Middlesbrough would benefit from a direct link to London and the electrification of North Allerton-Middlesbrough should therefore be a priority, which would also benefit freight traffic and trans-Pennine traffic. Their view is that the Strategy

should focus on connecting all LEP areas and a focus on five largest cities is therefore too narrow. Bradford Council noted that they saw the strategic connectivity of Bradford as important, and that Bradford should be identified in the same way as the five largest cities.

The Humber Authorities stressed that the Strategy needs to be careful not to focus on main centres at the expense of other routes and settlements. They suggested that routes between major towns and cities should have equal weight as those between the largest cities. They comment that the Strategy is weak on developing direct London services to those places not well served or not served at all, and opportunities for improved ECML service pattern post HS2 implementation should be considered.

The Consultation Draft Strategy stated that where possible, direct services should be provided to London from each town or city in inter-connected urban matrix in some hours and that throughout the day there should be half-hourly services with single interchange.

For passenger services to international gateways, the Consultation Draft calls for:

- Existing links from inter-connected matrix towns and cities to airports to be maintained
- Where possible, for there to be hourly direct services from each town and city in inter-connected urban matrix to Manchester Airport and as a minimum, for there to be the ability to get to Manchester Airport with just a single interchange
- Rail connectivity to other airports in the North and to East Midlands Airport to be provided via bus/tram/metro from the nearest hub rail station

The Consultation Draft Strategy has a set of outputs that would lead to significant improvements to the connectivity of town and cities across the North to London and to international gateways. It is considered that these capture the aspirations set out by respondents to the consultation.

Question 14

Are there other priorities?

The comments received for this section were very similar to the comments received for Q1B. The main focus of the responses fall within the following categories;

- Recognition of tourism potential;
- A greater understanding of the varying roles that the rail network plays (e.g. connections to education and health)

- Rolling Stock Improvements;
- Increased provision of connecting transport services to improve multi-modal integration;
- Competitive ticketing structure and fare levels to make train travel more affordable and attractive;
- Better connectivity to key urban centres and interchanges; and,
- Improved frequencies on current routes.

Both Lancashire and North Yorkshire County Councils commented that the Strategy must be a shared strategy that benefits all partners, not just the 5 largest cities and their respective ITAs. It is important to reflect the distinct roles of rail and the diversity of the North.

In response to the consultation, greater weight has been placed on the role that Community Rail Partnerships have played in the growth and development of the North's railway and the role they can play in the future

Question 15

How important is electrification?

Seventy three of the 76 respondents agreed that electrification is important. Many of the respondents recognised the benefits that electrification can bring to the rail network, including faster journey times, more reliable services and a more environmentally efficient transport network.

A number of comments from the freight sector noted that it is important that the Electric Spine is seamlessly connected to the ports with no change in traction. It was however noted that the freight sector has a large fleet of modern diesel locomotives (for example, Class 66 which is only half way through its economic life). It was also suggested that the North Trans Pennine electrification could compromise the usefulness of this route for freight traffic because of the intensive passenger service planned.

A number of examples of routes that should be electrified have been suggested by respondents to extend the benefits of electrification to inter-regional and urban commuter services, these include;

- Sheffield - Doncaster – Leeds (both via Moorthorpe and Barnsley),
- Selby - Hull
- Middlesbrough - North Allerton
- York - Scarborough

- Manchester - Warrington - Liverpool South Parkway
- Manchester - Sheffield - Doncaster - Cleethorpes / Gilberdyke – (Hull)
- Lancaster – Barrow
- Oxenholme - Windermere¹
- Carlisle - Newcastle.
- Carlisle - Skipton/Blackburn - Bolton.
- Atherton Line
- Calder Valley Line
- Todmorden – Burnley - Preston

Since the publication of the Consultation Draft Strategy, the Department for Transport has announced that it is establishing a joint industry task force to identify the case for the next phase of electrification in the North. This is scheduled to report by the end of 2014 and will consider a large number of candidate routes including many proposed by respondents to the consultation.

Question 16

Should the focus be on better quality of service, irrespective of how trains are powered?

Many respondents commented that there is a link between electrification and the quality of vehicles and that if a 'step change' in vehicle quality is to be achieved, there needs to be electrification to 'push' train operating companies to upgrade their fleets. There was also specific mention for the need to withdraw the Pacer vehicles well before the anticipated 2019 date. ASLEF added that electrification facilitates a much better passenger experience and this has subsequently shown to attract more people to travel by rail.

South Yorkshire ITA commented that although it strongly supported the proposals for extending the electrified network, it recognised that there still needs to be an enhancement of the quality on non-electrified lines. This view point was also shared by Lancashire County Council and West Yorkshire ITA and each identified a combination of major train refurbishment and further electrification is needed to improve the quality of the service. Some respondents considered there to be a need to state explicitly that routes which are not proposed for electrification in the short to medium term will not be left with old infrastructure and rolling stock thus falling further behind the standards of electrified routes.

¹ Note that since the publication of the draft Strategy, DfT has asked Network Rail to commence development work on electrification of this route

Many of the user groups commented that passengers want better services, irrespective of how the train is powered. Although the change of routes with electrification will prompt new rolling stock, there must be a general improvement in quality as it is considered that many of the carriages are out of date and in need of modernisation.

The Consultation Draft Strategy states that electrification should not lead to a loss of existing connectivity and that it is essential that services are not dislocated at the electrification boundary, even if this may mean that through services need to continue with diesel traction in use over some newly electrified sections of route. It also sets out the need for a North-wide rolling stock strategy that delivers needed capacity and expected quality, regardless of whether diesel, electrically or bi-modally powered. Overall, it is considered that the Consultation Draft Strategy fits well with the responses and no substantive amendment is required.

Question 17

Is there sufficient consideration of freight?

The freight companies that responded to this question generally support the content of the Strategy; however, they made clear that the priority for freight is to increase the proportion of electrified routes to encourage investment in electric traction for freight. Further to this, they said electrification will only benefit rail freight if the overhead lines go all the way into the yards and terminals with the correct gauge clearance.

Through other responses, there is clear acknowledgement that an efficient rail network can help support economic growth and the Strategy does make this clear. Some respondents commented that freight should be given a higher priority and that benefits of increased rail freight should be emphasised in the Strategy.

One respondent noted that it is very important that Rail North speaks for freight as well as the passenger and that freight paths are protected. The construction of HS2 must ensure that freight paths are still available on the shared sections of the WCML or on alternative routes such as Settle - Carlisle and Blackburn - Hellifield.

It was also noted that the Strategy should highlight key developments such as Rossington Inland Port, Port Salford and improvements to the seaports to ensure that the future growth of the logistics industry is matched within the planned improvement for the supporting rail infrastructure.

The Association of North East Councils commented that it is important to strike a balance between freight and passenger and plan for both, address pinch points etc. There must be processes to ensure that the Strategy does not adversely impact on one to favour the other.

The Rail Freight Group highlighted key issues and challenges for rail freight as:

- Improved access to northern ports
- Improved efficiency through longer and heavier trains
- Capacity for freight on the key trunk routes (WCML, ECML, trans-Pennine routes)
- Increased importance of MML post electric spine
- Improved capacity at weekends and overnight
- Further gauge enhancement
- Electrification
- Better connectivity with centres of supply and demand, such as ports, power stations and terminals
- Better connectivity for long distance flows across the UK and into Europe through the Channel Tunnel
- Providing access to the rail network 24/7

The freight-related Conditional Outputs have been amended after consideration of the consultation responses.

Question 18

Is the focus on service categories right?

There is general support for the approach with 51 out of the 61 respondents to the question agreeing that the Strategy has the right focus. There is a clear notion that the use of service categorisation is useful, but in some cases, routes and service categories may need to change, which may need decisions on service patterns or investment in better rolling stock or infrastructure. There needs to be the opportunity to re-classify lines through targeted investment. Categorisation should not confuse lines with CRPs and those that are there to service areas of isolation and low population. Similarly CRP designation does not necessarily automatically lead to identification of a line as category 4, 'community railway'.

There were a number of comments regarding the rigidity of the categories as in some cases there may be conflict of uses. For example, 'Urban Commuter' is not just for commuters, but is also used for leisure and shopping trips. There was also a mention that local services are often feeders to the long distance lines and so this should be recognised.

Various community groups noted that there needs to be more emphasis on the benefits of Community lines and clarity is required about what each service category actually means for all; e.g. northern community lines does not quite sound right for lines such as

Hull – York; or where there is a mix of urban/rural such as the York – Harrogate – Leeds line.

Given that the consultation responses generally supported the position on service categories in the Consultation Draft, no amendment was necessary.

Question 19

What needs to happen to make this a reality?

West Yorkshire ITA commented that in order for the Strategy to be implemented, it is imperative that the right settlement with Government for devolution of rail powers is achieved. Cumbria County Council added that Rail North needs to be an inclusive body which ensures that all interests are recognised and engaged. It needs to develop a specific implementation strategy which combines speed of decision-making with the right degree of consultation and participation.

Merseytravel noted that in order to pursue the approach of defining service categories, each service will need to be reviewed to see which category it best fits. In order to help passengers identify the different levels of service and to know the standard to expect for that route, individual branding of service categories stations and marketing (and potentially rolling stock) should be made, developed and implemented. They commented that a similar approach exists in many other European countries, for instance in Germany with “S-Bahn” stations.

A number of the Local Authorities stated that there needs to be a specification and a full understanding of the costs for each category of service so that this can be fed into any future franchises or other methods of procurement of services in the future. This would also need an effective relationship with Network Rail, as the owner and operator of the rail infrastructure. A constructive relationship with operators is also important.

The view was also expressed that the Strategy needs to be clearer on how its implications will translate into specific proposals for intervention on the rail network which achieve the conditional outputs.

Since the publication of the Consultation Draft, the Secretary of State for Transport and Rail North have agreed to develop a partnership approach to the re-franchised Northern and Transpennine services. The competition for these will begin in the first half of 2014 with new franchisees being in place by February 2016. A shared set of principles has been agreed to underpin this Partnership. These acknowledge the importance of growing the railway to maximise the benefits of infrastructure investment and linking this to railway efficiencies and having a platform for determining investment priorities within the Partnership. The Secretary of State has welcomed the principle of risk and reward sharing between members of the Partnership. The parties intend to agree detailed arrangements to ensure that the franchises will be jointly designed and managed by the Partnership, with DfT running the procurement processes to a common timetable. Of course, while highly important the re-franchising of Northern and Trans Pennine is just one way that the Strategy will be implemented. It is important that other franchise competitions reflect the Strategy's Conditional Outputs and the rail industry rises to the challenge to deliver the necessary enhancements to the network. Programmes such as the Northern Hub and electrification are examples of how the North and the rail industry can work together to deliver common goals.

Question 20 and Question 21

Is the strategic programme the right one? and,

Are the right issues allocated to the right time periods?

Fifty one of the 55 respondents to this question agreed that the Strategy had set out the correct strategic programme. There was general agreement from Local Transport Authorities that the programme reflects the priorities within respective Local Transport Plans and takes into account the evidence put forward in the Route Utilisation Strategies.

Some respondents commented that various other lines should be included within the electrification programme but these comments were repetitions from Q15. It was also noted that an alternative plan should be created in case electrification does not happen.

From an interpretation point of view, it was noted that it would be useful if the Strategy included a summary table of the conditional outputs at the end of each strategy time period (Network Rail Control Periods).

The Campaign for Better Transport commented that in the short term there should be reference to the need to halt the above inflation fare increases and that the long term should include how HS2 will fit into the North's rail network. Subsequent to the close of consultation, Government has confirmed that in the short term fare increases will now be capped at the Retail Price Index.

There should also be an inclusion in the Strategy of how HS2 will free up capacity to allow extra freight movements on the network. Many local rail groups also stated that the need to replace the existing rolling stock should be a short term priority and that

improvement in smart ticketing, CCTV and information provision need also to be delivered as soon as possible.

It was commented by several respondents that many interventions are already in industry plans so the ability to change these timescales is limited. Many respondents felt that whilst it is important to be clear about what can be delivered in the short term, it is critical, to secure as many improvements as possible. The Strategy should help decrease the lengthy process of implementation of rail network improvements as faster delivery will create the needed step change in the rail offer.

In the light of the consultation responses, no substantive changes have been made to the programme set out in Chapter 7.

Question 22

Is the balance between passenger and freight in the strategic programme right?

Forty four out of 50 responses felt that the balance was appropriate, including all the responses from the freight industry who believed that the right balance was being achieved. DB Schenker and Rail Freight Group have stressed the need for continual engagement with the rail freight community throughout the development of the strategy to ensure that issues are being communicated and possible solutions are considered.

In the light of the consultation responses, no substantive changes have been made to the programme set out in Chapter 7.

Question 23 and Question 24

Are the right delivery agencies and potential funders identified? and,

Are there others which should be referenced?

Thirty seven out of the 44 respondents agreed that the right delivery agencies were identified. Regard was shown to the need for parties to work together. First Keolis Transpennine Express Limited noted that alliancing with Network Rail could be pursued as a measure to deliver significant cost savings.

Tees Valley Unlimited commented that there needs to be recognition of the Local Growth Fund and the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Transport Authorities as a means of securing funding. A number of respondents noted that property developers should be considered as a potential funder as the use of Section 106 funding has been a successful source for both large scale improvements to rail infrastructure and small scale improvements to station facilities and access improvements. Many respondents also mentioned that ERDF and other European and regeneration funding could be used as a funding source. Many of the CRPs and support

groups requested that the importance of the work which they carry out for championing improvements to their respective lines and areas needs to be given more weight within the Strategy.

Some respondents were critical of this section, commenting that the Strategy gives cursory consideration to present day funding and does not consider future funding sources. They noted that it is extremely important that Rail North gets a suitable financial arrangement from Government to take on responsibility for managing franchises under devolution. Respondents from the North East stated that Rail North should aim to redistribute the historic geographic imbalance in transport investment, focusing an ambitious programme of works to be implemented more rapidly.

The Strategy document has been amended to reflect the developing and growing role of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the importance of Strategic Economic Plans.

Question 25

Is the current fares regime fit for purpose?

Out of the 56 respondents to this question, 43 stated that the current fares regime is not fit for purpose and requires a fundamental overhaul. The majority of comments were focused on the complexity of the fare structures without clear indication of restrictions for use. SYITA noted that a complex fare structure can act as a deterrent to the use of rail. SYITA and other responses support the suggestions made within the Strategy for zonal pricing and for the migration to smart ticketing.

In the light of the consultation responses, no substantive changes have been made to the Strategy document with respect to fares.

Question 26

What changes could be made to the current fares regime?

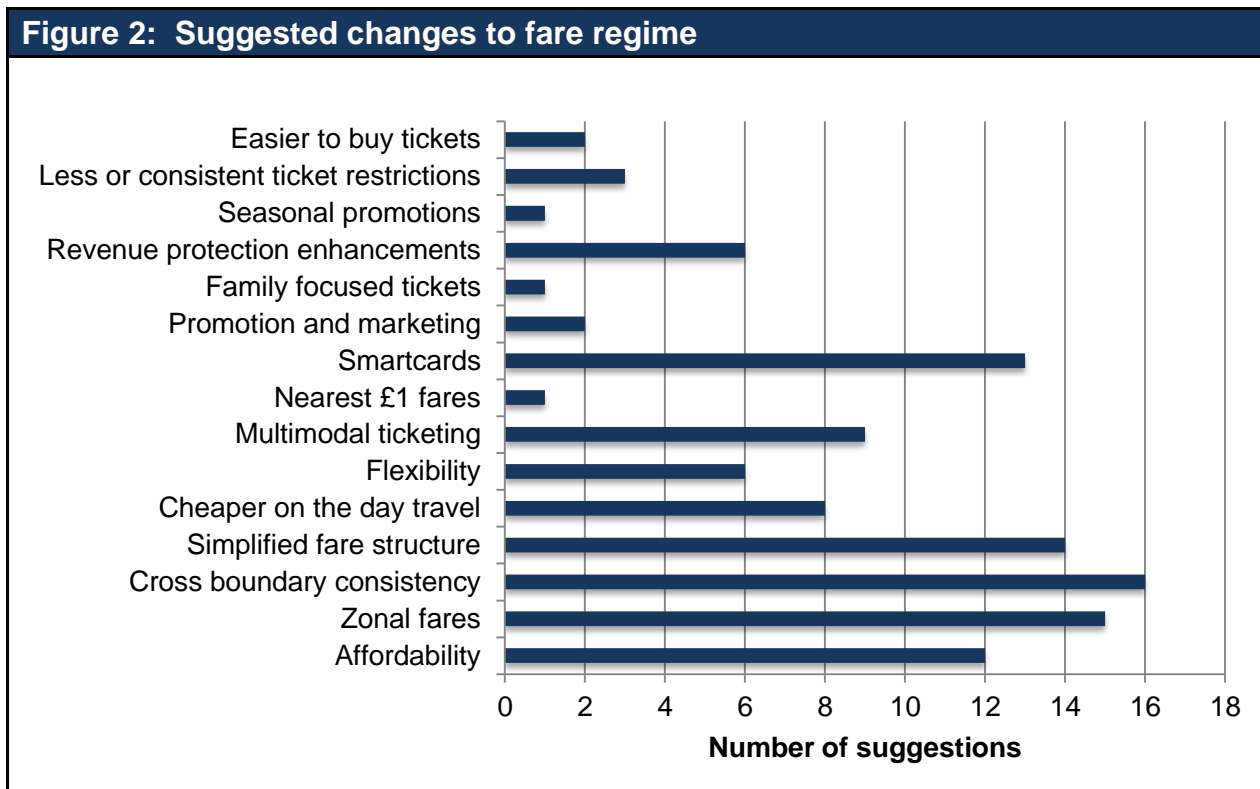


Figure 2 has been created by calculating the frequencies of each response, detailing which areas of the ticketing regime respondents felt need revision. The most common change that is suggested is the need for the removal of cross boundary fare distortion. Many respondents from all sectors (individuals, local groups, Local Authorities and rail groups) commented that there needs to be a removal of the fare jumps that occur when travelling between Local Transport Authority boundaries. A zonal fare structure is supported by many respondents with acknowledgement that this could remove the inconsistency in the current fare regime and provide a clearer and easier understood fares structure. As mentioned in Q25, many of the respondents want to see simpler and more affordable rail fares, with a number of comments focusing the need to remove unnecessary charges for changing tickets and making fares for similar distance journeys comparable. There were also a number of comments from rail user groups requesting the price discrimination that occurs on rail fares is removed, meaning the abolition of peak time fares and a lower penalty price for 'walk up' fares.

Smart ticketing was supported by the majority of respondents to this question as these provide the first step towards the use of technology and simpler purchasing. There were however a number of comments that smart technology should be affordable. It was also noted that smart ticketing provides a strong platform for multimodal integration if designed to be compatible with existing products.

In the light of the consultation responses, no substantive changes have been made to the Strategy document with respect to fares.

Question 27

If there are any other comments you wish to make about the Strategy, please enter them below.

It must be noted that many of the respondent's answers to Q27 are more appropriate and relevant to other questions in the Consultation Report. Where this has happened, the comments have been included in the respective question and not included as a response in this section.

The impact of decisions outside the control of the North needs to be carefully considered. Examples include what are seen as "Strategic Routes" by Government, the DfT-led franchise process and ORR decisions. In addition, there were a number of comments on aspects of rail devolution in the North as proposed by Rail North at the time of consultation.

It was also felt that the Strategy should provide greater detail of implementation plans, and how the pan-Northern Strategy links with sub-regional strategies. It would benefit from a clearer development strategy to inform long term planning. There may be a need to develop a prioritised list of future schemes or a supporting technical strategy in the longer term.

Generally, the Strategy has been welcomed and many respondents support the approach in terms of developing conditional outputs. It is particularly important that the Northern Hub programme is delivered in full and to anticipated timescales so that pan-northern benefits are realised. This includes improvements to the frequency and journey times of services on the Hope Valley Line between South Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.

Appendix A: List of respondents

Long Term Rail Strategy Consultation 2013 Respondents	
Organisation Type	Organisation
Local Transport Authorities	Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body
	Blackpool Council
	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
	South Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority
	North Yorkshire County Council
	Lancashire County Council
	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
	Derbyshire County Council
	Tees Valley Unlimited
	Humber Authorities
	Association of North East Councils (ANEC)
	West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority
	Merseytravel
	Cumbria County Council
	South Humber Bank (North and North East Lincolnshire Councils)
Other local authorities, MPs and public sector agencies	John Pugh MP, Southport
	Calderdale Council
	Lancaster City Council
	Pontefract and Knottingley Councillors
	Rochdale Council
	Councillor Iain Lindley (Salford Council)
	Wakefield Council
	Bradford Council
	David Morris MP, Morecambe and Lunesdale

Long Term Rail Strategy Consultation 2013 Respondents

Organisation Type	Organisation
National organisations	Campaign for Better Transport
	Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
	Hannah Mitchell Foundation
	Railfuture
	Freight on Rail
	Passenger Focus
	Department for Transport
Rail Industry	First Keolis Transpennine Express Limited
	Freightliner Group
	Rail Freight Group
	DB Schenker UK
	Pontefract Business Forum
Local Groups	Travelwatch North West
	Ormskirk Preston and Southport Travellers Association (OPSTA)
	Lancaster and Skipton Rail User Group
	Mytholmroyd Station Partnership
	Friends of Patricroft Station
	Harrogate Line Rail Users Group
	Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line
	Copeland Rail Users Group
	Leeds Lancaster Morecambe Community Rail Partnership
	Campaign for Better Transport Lancashire
	Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce
	Doncaster Chamber of Commerce
	Support the Oldham Rochdale Manchester Lines (STORM)
	Friends of the Brigg & Lincoln Lines
	South East Northumberland Rail User Group (SENRUG)

Long Term Rail Strategy Consultation 2013 Respondents	
Organisation Type	Organisation
	Huddersfield Penistone Sheffield Rail Users Association
	Pontefract Civic Society
	Friends of Eccles Station (FRECCLES)
	North Cheshire Rail Users Group
	Selby and District Rail Users Group
	Tyne Valley Rail Users' Group and Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership
	Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Sustainable Transport Group
	Humber Region Rail Development Company Ltd
	Friends of Walkden Station
	Lancaster, Morecambe and District Rail User Group
	Halifax and District Rail Action Group
	North East Combined Transport Activists Roundtable (NECTAR)
	Campaign for Borders Rail
	West of Lancashire Community Rail Partnership
	Hull and East Riding Rail Users Association
	Furness Line Community Rail Partnership
	Skipton East Lancashire Rail Action Partnership (SELRAP)
	Leeds Northern Railway Reinstatement Group

There are also responses from 39 individuals.