

RAIL NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR THE NORTH AND MIDLANDS INTERIM REPORT – RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

Question 1: Please provide specific sources for evidence that the Commission could use in estimating costs and the impact of proposals on journey time and capacity.

Based on the Commission's statement within the Interim Report (page 36) of the rail investments that it feels are in scope and how this applies to the Sheffield City Region's priorities submitted previously, the following are key sources of evidence relating to the performance of the railway or that provide information on costs and benefits associated with particular investments:

- Northern Powerhouse Rail Strategic Outline Business Case (TfN, February 2019)
- Northern Powerhouse Rail Draft Strategic Outline Case (TfN, August 2020)
- Continuous Modular Strategic Planning: Sheffield Area Strategic Question (Network Rail, August 2019)
- Midland Main Line Electrification: Reinforcing the Case for Investment (Sheffield City Region, February 2016)
- East Coast Main Line Route Study (Network Rail, June 2018)
- ECML: Benefits of Investment (Systra, June 2019)
- GatewayEast Rail Strategic Outline Business Case (Doncaster Council, Doncaster Sheffield Airport Ltd and Sheffield City Region Combined Authority (February 2020)
- Barnsley Rail Vision (Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, November 2018)

We would also draw the Commission's attention to the work contained in the Sheffield City Region Integrated Rail Plan (Sheffield City Region, July 2019), a copy of which has been provided previously, and the two documents setting out a series of 'asks' of the Integrated Rail Plan for the Midlands and the North from SCR designed to inform the final document.

Question 2: Given the evidence for how transport impacts growth and competitiveness, is assessing against the Commission's proposed criteria of productivity, connectivity, and unlocking investment in land around stations a reasonable approach to estimating the impacts of proposed rail investments? Please provide links to any specific sources of evidence you think that the Commission should use to support this methodology.

The SCR would agree with the Commission's assertion that conventional approaches to cost benefit analysis are not appropriate in this context and agrees with the overall approach suggested in Table 3.2.

In terms of **productivity**, the following are key sources of evidence that we would highlight to the commission:

- The case for an integrated new rail network serving the Eastern Leg (Volterra, June 2020)
- Economic impacts of connectivity provided by HS2 in Sheffield City Region (Arup, October 2018)
- Northern Powerhouse Rail Strategic Outline Business Case (TfN, February 2019)
- The Case for Upgrading and Electrifying the Midland Main Line (East Midlands Councils and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, November 2011)
- ECML: Benefits of Investment (Systra, June 2019)

- Prospectus for investment in the East Coast Main Line (JMP, September 2014)
- GatewayEast Rail Strategic Outline Business Case (Doncaster Council, Doncaster Sheffield Airport Ltd and Sheffield City Region Combined Authority, February 2020)

To assess improvements in **connectivity**, many of the references included in response to Question 1 above provide details on how the SCR would like to see improvements in rail connectivity to support its economic, decarbonisation and place making plans. In particular, the Sheffield City Region Integrated Rail Plan included a table of the changes in frequency and journey times to which the SCR aspires through the interventions set out in the Plan. This is reproduced below, edited to include only those listed in Annex A of the Interim Report that the Commission will consider for this analysis.

Service	Frequency <i>Trains per hour</i>		Journey Time <i>Hours : Minutes</i>	
	Now	Aspiration	Now	Aspiration
Barnsley to...				
Leeds	2	➡ 2	0:35	➡ 0:30
Nottingham	1	➡ 2	1:15	➡ 1:10
Huddersfield	1	➡ 2	0:47	➡ 0:40
Sheffield (semi-fast)	2	➡ 2	0:22	➡ 0:20
Sheffield (stopping)	2	➡ 4	0:26 – 0:30	➡ 0:25
Doncaster to...				
Sheffield (fast/semi-fast)	3	➡ 4	0:22 – 0:28	➡ 0:20
Sheffield via Rotherham	2	➡ 2	0:38 – 0:40	➡ 0:35
Leeds	2	➡ 3	0:33	➡ 0:25
Leeds (stopping)	1	➡ 2	0:46	➡ 0:40
Lincoln	5 per day	➡ 1	0:50	➡ 0:45
Manchester	1	➡ 1	1:20	➡ 1:00
Hull	2	➡ 2	0:50 – 1:00	➡ 0:30
Sheffield to...				
Barnsley (semi-fast)	2	➡ 2	0:22	➡ 0:20
Doncaster (fast/semi-fast)	3	➡ 4	0:22 – 0:28	➡ 0:20
Doncaster via Rotherham	2	➡ 2	0:38 – 0:40	➡ 0:30
Leeds (fast)	1	➡ 2	0:40	➡ 0:28
Leeds via Rotherham	1	➡ 2	1:15	➡ 1:00
Manchester (fast)	2	➡ 4	0:48 – 0:51	➡ 0:40
Lincoln	1	➡ 1	1:19	➡ 1:00
Hull	2	➡ 2	1:26	➡ 0:50

To assess the benefits of unlocking investment in land around stations, we would refer the commission to the recently published Sheffield Midland Station and Sheaf Valley Development Framework, which has been provided previously. This document sets out a vision for the City Region that aims to deliver transformational regeneration outcomes that will drive sustainable and inclusive growth, maximise the benefits of transport investments and improve the lives of people and communities. This is aligned with local transport interventions that are integrated with the plans for the railway.

The Framework was developed from a series of supporting workstreams as part of the SCR HS2 Growth Strategy, including Shaping the Growth Strategy for SCR – Emerging Findings and Proposals from the Technical Evidence Base (SCR, October 2018) and the following supporting reports:

- Economic Impact and Additionality of the Growth Strategy (Ekosgen, October 2018)
- Land and Property Assessment (Cushman and Wakefield, October 2018)

- Skills and Employment Opportunities for Residents and Businesses (Ekosgen, October 2018)

Similar urban centre development plans predicated on high quality rail connectivity already exist, or are in development, in Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham, including for the proposed new NPR stations at Rotherham and Barnsley Dearne Valley.

Question 3: Given the evidence for how transport impacts sustainability and quality of life, is assessing against the Commission's proposed criteria of amenity benefits, impact of rail freight, natural capital, and lifecycle carbon emissions, a reasonable approach to estimating the sustainability and quality of life impacts of proposed rail investments? Please provide links to any specific sources of evidence you think that the Commission should use to support this methodology.

The Commission's suggested approach seems reasonable and proposes to use the most recent academic research on issues such as amenity benefits and natural capital, which is in accord with the approach being adopted in the SCR through our Net Zero Framework.

Business cases for schemes in the SCR or for national projects such as HS2 or NPR will include some estimates of reductions in greenhouse gases and improvements in air quality, but these will be based on the more narrow definitions of each used by the current Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG). However, the TAG-compliant analysis done to date may provide the Commission with some useful supporting evidence on the quality of life benefits of the SCR's priorities, particularly in the GatewayEast Rail Strategic Outline Business Case.

The Continuous Modular Strategic Planning: Sheffield Area Strategic Question outputs can provide the Commission with particular information on the benefits of some of the SCR's priorities for rail freight operations. In addition, Network Rail is preparing its plan for decarbonisation of the rail network and this is expected to be published later this year. This will inform the proposals for the railway in the SCR including how to deliver electrification as part of a rolling programme, along with associated requirements for power supply, rolling stock and depots. This integrated approach will not only support decarbonisation but will also deliver performance improvements and make best use of key rail infrastructure investments.

Question 4: Do you agree with the Commission's proposed approach to uncertainty?

The SCR agrees with the Commission's statement about the degree of uncertainty involved in making any large investment decision and welcomes the suggestion that the outputs will include a list of what a decision maker would have to accept in order to believe that the potential benefits stated would be realised, given that it will provide clarity of the assumptions made, and any risks involved, at the decision-making point. It is worth noting the counter position where commitment to investment and a delivery programme builds economic confidence and complementary investment in housing and employment creating activities.