



# Staffordshire Rail Strategy May 2015

Draft for Consideration by Prosperous Staffordshire  
Select Committee

*the knot unites*



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## 1. Introduction

### Overview

This Rail Strategy sets out the role of Staffordshire's rail network now and in the future. It is objective led and sets out the challenges and opportunities facing Staffordshire's rail network together with how this can be addressed.

The Strategy considers the needs of both passengers and freight and builds on existing plans including the rail industry's Long Term Planning Process. A suite of technical documents that provide further detail and support this Strategy are available from [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/railstrategy.aspx](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/railstrategy.aspx)

Whilst the focus of the Strategy is long term – through to the mid 2020s and beyond, the Strategy will also identify short-term goals and will, therefore, include short, medium and long-term action plans.

This Rail Strategy will remain a fluid document that will be updated on a regular basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects the County Council's priorities for investment.

### Context

It is recognised that better connectivity is an enabler of growth and prosperity and, therefore, forms a key element of the County Council's Strategic Plan vision. In addition, one of the Council's top strategic priority outcomes is to be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth. Rail will be a key driver in achieving these ambitions.

**In 2013/14 over 10.1 million people used rail stations in Staffordshire**

It is essential for Staffordshire to establish its key priorities in terms of rail if the Council and its partners are to achieve their ambitions and ensure that Staffordshire enjoys a rail service that meets both current and future needs.

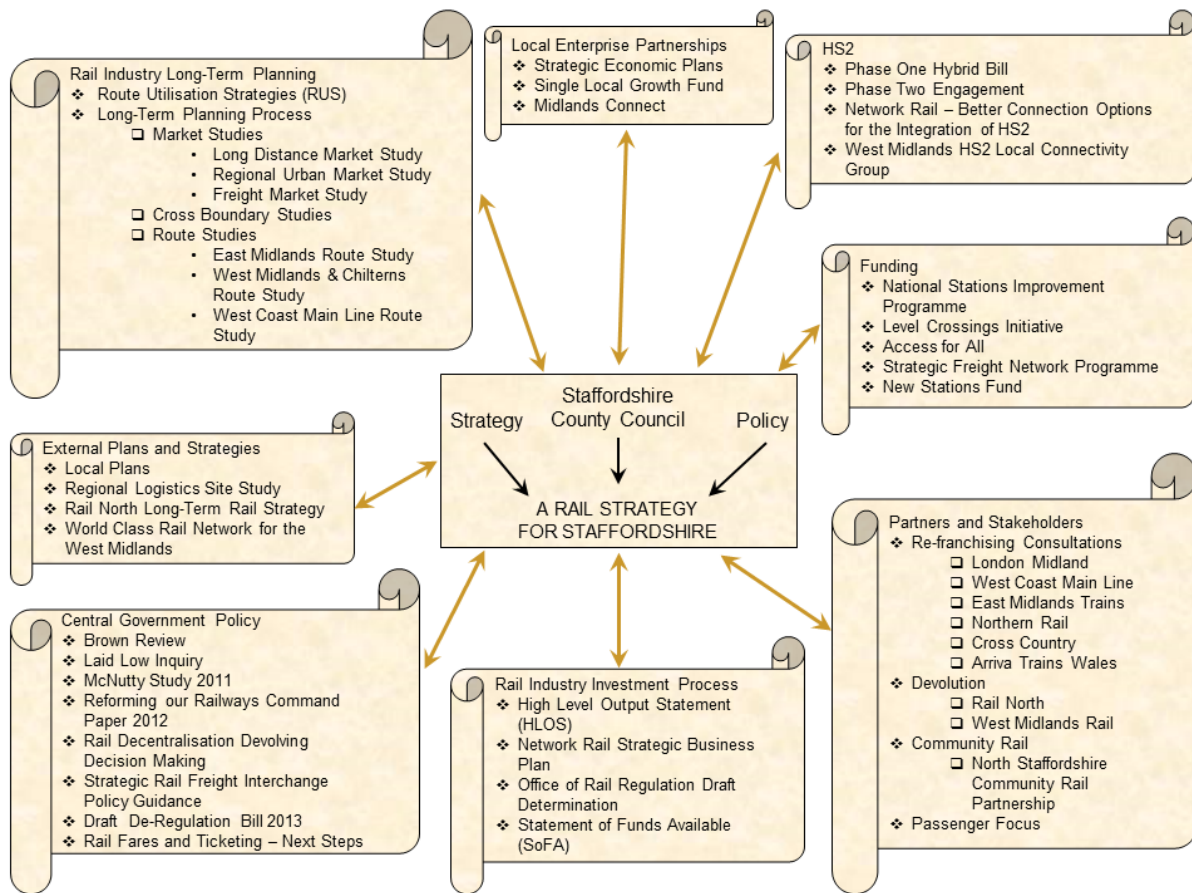
The Rail Strategy will therefore:

- Provide a sound basis to effectively respond to national consultations including re-franchising.
- Provide a clear set of priorities to enable available investment opportunities to be maximised.
- Take advantage of any emerging opportunities such as entrepreneurial private enterprise and open access opportunities.
- Help shape the devolution proposals for West Midlands Rail and Rail North, providing greater accountability and decision-making in relation to local rail services.
- Help shape the industry's Long Term Planning Process for future investment in the rail network.
- Help provide the best possible opportunities to gain access to the existing and future National and European High Speed Passenger Network.
- Help plan for the best use of released capacity on the classic network upon completion of HS2.

Figure 1 demonstrates how delivering the Rail Strategy for Staffordshire will integrate with and influence wider policy and strategy, and support the securing of greater investment and economic growth in Staffordshire.



Figure 1: Integration and Influence of Staffordshire Rail Strategy



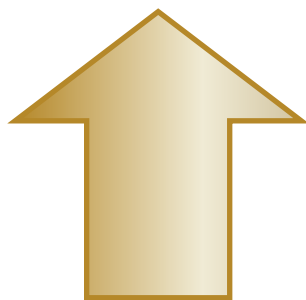
### Geographic Scope

Staffordshire is uniquely placed at the centre of the country’s rail network, located on key transport arteries and corridors, giving easy access to large economic centres such as Manchester and the North West, Birmingham, the East Midlands and the South East. The West Coast Main Line (WCML) runs north to south through the county, providing frequent connections to London, Manchester and Liverpool.

Birmingham is just a 30-minute journey from Stafford Rail Station. Other main stations within Staffordshire include Burton upon Trent which lies on the Cross Country Route between Birmingham and Derby, and Tamworth which is served by both the WCML and the Cross Country Route. There are 19 local rail stations in the area that offer varying degrees of connectivity to both local destinations and those further afield.

Figure 2 shows the average journey times to Birmingham, Manchester and London.

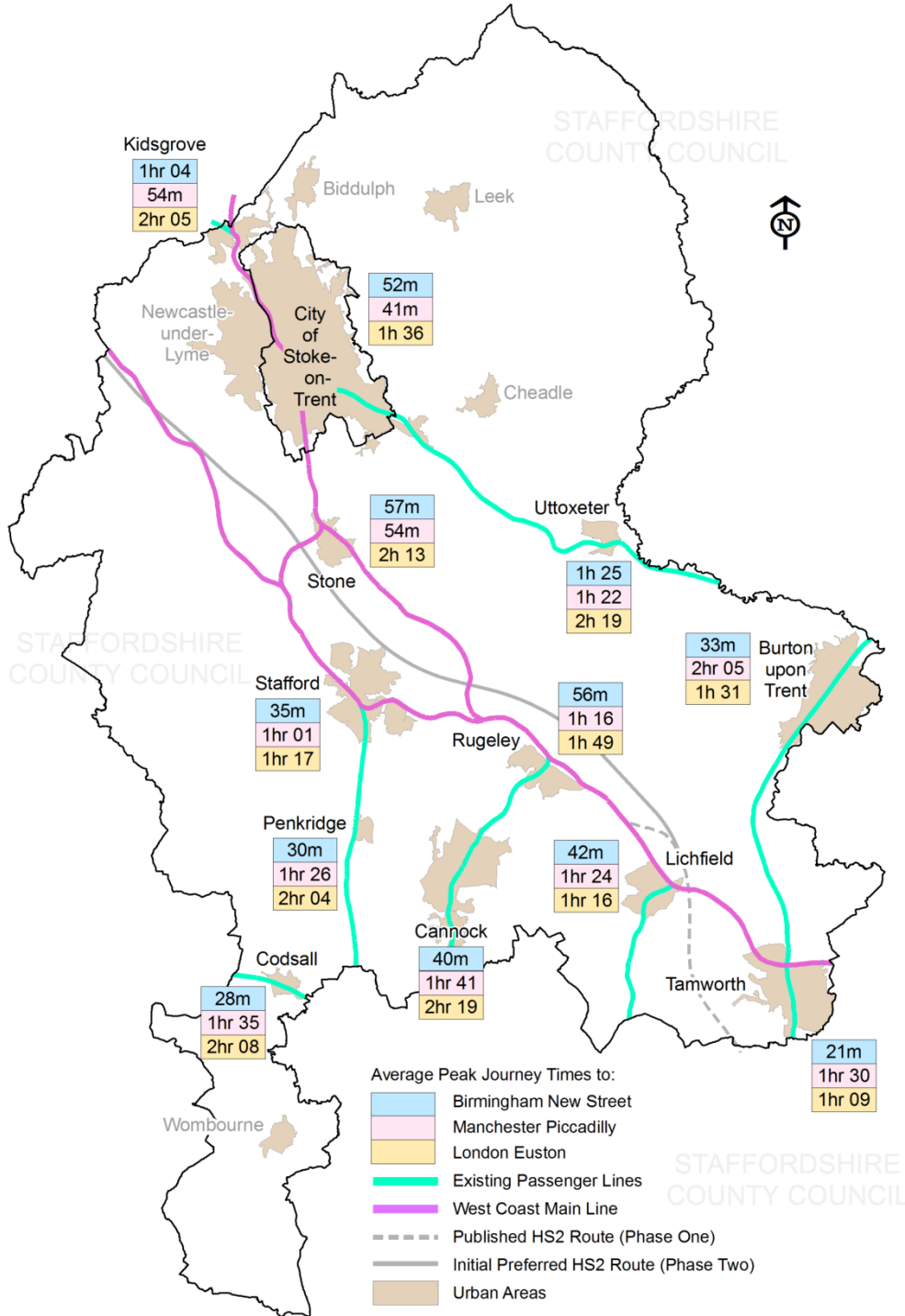
Rail Patronage has increased in Staffordshire by **71%** since 2006/07



Staffordshire’s rail network plays an important role in the movement of freight and is located at the centre of some important regional and national routes, with good connections to a number of freight terminals. The most important freight route for Staffordshire is the WCML, one of the country’s principal routes with over 50 freight trains operating along it per day in each direction.

Staffordshire County Council is also a member of the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership which works to promote and develop the Crewe-Derby Route which is also known as the North Staffordshire Line.

Figure 2: Average Peak Journeys Times to Birmingham, Manchester and London



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**Vision**

A well-connected, modern, safe, affordable, reliable, attractive and low carbon rail network that allows businesses, people and goods to connect efficiently and effectively with each other, whilst playing a central role in supporting the economic growth of Staffordshire.

The vision which underpins this Strategy has been developed through extensive consultation undertaken with the public, the rail industry, LEPs and local interest groups (further information regarding the consultation undertaken in developing the

Rail Vision is available from:

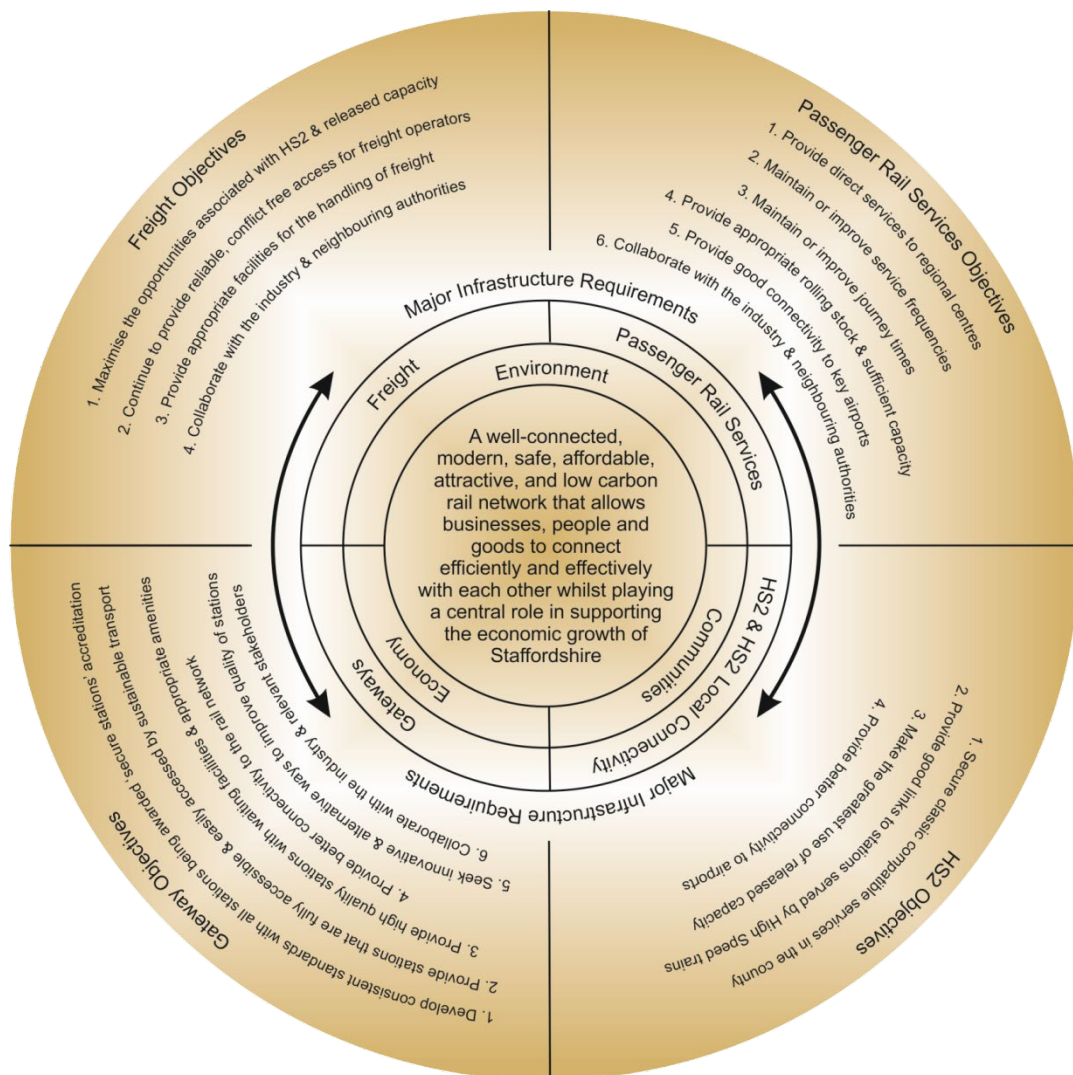
[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/locatransportplan/railstrategy.a.spx](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/locatransportplan/railstrategy.a.spx))

**Objectives**

To achieve the vision, Staffordshire County Council has adopted a series of objectives that are summarised in Figure 3, with greater detail provided in each individual section.

It is important to note that these objectives cannot be considered in isolation and individual measures to achieve these objectives will still be subject to meeting the appropriate deliverability, affordability and value for money criteria.

Figure 3: Staffordshire Rail Strategy Framework



## 2. Economic Growth

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) aims to grow the economy by 50% and generate 50,000 jobs in the next 10 years – 50:50:10.

- Staffordshire is home to numerous internationally-renowned businesses including: Alstom, Coors, JCB, Jaguar Land Rover, Moog and Zytex.
- The area is home to a buoyant Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) sector, making a significant contribution to growth.
- Inward investment performance has been strong in recent years, with notable investment including, Jaguar Land Rover and Amazon.
- Local universities actively engage in research and innovation support to a number of the nation's most important future industrial sectors.
- The rural nature of large parts of the area has helped generate significant levels of growth as greater numbers of companies choose to relocate to out-of-town locations.

The LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) is based on a twin track approach comprising both sector and place-led growth with five central objectives:

**Core City**

**Connected County**

**Competitive Urban Centres**

**Sector Growth**

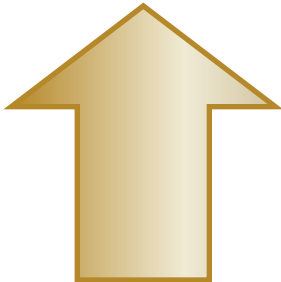
**Skilled Workforce**

Staffordshire is home to a strong set of businesses in key industrial sectors. The manufacturing heritage of the area and recent renaissance driven by advanced manufacturing industries has led to the growth of a number of niche sectors across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, particularly within:

- Energy Generation
- Auto Aero
- Medical Technologies
- Agri Tech
- Applied Materials

Growth in exports has been particularly strong in the West Midlands over the last couple of years and emphasises the opportunities presented by manufacturing industries.

**Exports have increased  
by over  
£4.5bn  
year on  
year in  
the West  
Midlands**



*(2012/Q2–2012/Q1 to 2013/Q2–2014/Q1)*

This is a vast increase compared with any other area in the UK. Good connectivity to national and international markets will clearly be important if this growth in exports, a national priority, is to continue.

The focus on advanced manufacturing is complemented with a longer-term interest in strengthening the important sectors of tourism and business/professional services. Tourism and leisure currently accounts for more than:



## 23,000 jobs in Staffordshire and 20 million plus people visiting Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire every year

The area is home to a large number of attractions including Alton Towers Resort, Drayton Manor Theme Park and the SnowDome, while there is significant opportunity to build upon the area's sporting and leisure attractions such as those in the Peak District and Cannock Chase. Enabling people to easily access these attractions in a sustainable manner will clearly be vital in supporting this growth.

The number of households within the area is predicted to rise over the coming years, and an important element of economic growth is ensuring that there is an appropriate range (supply, distribution, quality and affordability) of sustainable housing available. Based on current local plans, the SEP quotes that around 3,370 homes are proposed to be built across all local authorities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on an annual basis.

However, this figure is based on the current Local Plans for the area and does not take into account growth plans outlined within the SEP. It should also be acknowledged that there may also be pressure for housing growth within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent from surrounding areas. Areas such as Birmingham cannot meet their housing need and will be increasingly looking towards surrounding areas to meet this need in the future.

The proposals for the HS2 project are also likely to lead to extra demand for housing; most prevalent in the south of the county

in Phase One of the project and in Cheshire and the north of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent in Phase Two. Therefore, there are significant opportunities for growth that lie beyond the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire boundaries, including towards Manchester, Liverpool and Derby, and significantly to the south into Birmingham and the Black Country.

This business and housing growth is likely to be in addition to growth already planned around the strategic centres in the county including at Stafford, Burton-upon-Trent, Cannock, Lichfield, Tamworth and Newcastle-under-Lyme as well as Stoke-on-Trent.

Along with the centres, the SEP has developed the idea of a growth triangle – a series of routes linking Staffordshire's strategic employment sites which will enable further rapid economic growth in the peri-urban areas and also underpin economic ties to the markets beyond Staffordshire's borders. These vital corridors include the M6/ WCML spine, the A5/M6 Toll Enterprise Belt and the A38/A50 Eastern Links.

Transport connectivity will, therefore, play a critical role in supporting economic flows and in unlocking investment in the necessary employment, housing and leisure developments.

Fast, reliable, frequent and connected transport networks are fundamentally important to the economic growth and competitiveness of the LEP. Strategic linkages shape the economic opportunities facing Staffordshire's business, and local linkages influence labour, residential and leisure flows, particularly in the urban areas.

To support economic growth and attract new investment, connectivity both to and within the area will need to be maximised. However, there is a number of connectivity challenges identified by the LEP which will constrain their growth ambitions. These are:



- Constraints on movement
- Constraints on development and growth potential (see graphic)

To address these constraints, both strategic (including rail) and local connectivity interventions will be required. The Vision for the objective 'A Connected County' is to build on Staffordshire's central location and existing linkages to deliver the transport networks, employment sites and supporting infrastructure required to make the area an attractive place to do business, work, live and visit. This is underpinned by six priority objectives built around the goal of achieving "super connectivity". A number of these directly relate to rail for example:

Transport links such as the WCML provide a fast link through the county between Scotland, the North West and London for both passenger and freight services.

It is transport links like these that will provide the connectivity the area needs to enhance its competitiveness of our urban centres, and to maintain our strategic urban centres including Stafford, Burton-upon-Trent, Lichfield, Cannock and Tamworth.

Having excellent rail links to Staffordshire will help to reduce the constraints on movement, allowing labour markets to access employment and providing investors with the access they need to the area. Fast and efficient networks will help unlock the potential of strategic development sites across Staffordshire, as well as key housing sites. Enhancing rail access to key employers such as JCB is, therefore, essential if the ambitions of 50:50:10 are to be realised. Schemes must be progressed within the rail industry to help the unobstructed movement of passengers and freight to provide a robust network for the future.

### 3. Passenger Rail Services (Local, Regional and Long Distance)

#### What is happening now?

Staffordshire's location means that it is dissected by the WCML and the Birmingham to Derby line (and the wider Cross Country network) and, therefore, the majority of trains which call at stations in Staffordshire serve either the regional or long-distance markets. These typically link

Staffordshire with London, the East Midlands, the West Midlands, South West England, North-West England, North-East England and Wales. For this reason many local journeys made by rail in Staffordshire, for example from Stafford to Stoke-on-Trent, are on regional or long-distance trains. Figure 4 provides an overview of the Staffordshire passenger rail network.

Figure 4: Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Passenger Rail Network



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There are six Train Operating Companies (TOCs) in Staffordshire.

Virgin Trains operate between London/West Midlands and the North West/Scotland, via the WCML.

Cross Country operate a network centring on Birmingham with services on two routes

A summary of typical off-peak services from some of Staffordshire's key rail stations is provided in Figure 5.

There has been significant growth in the number of rail journeys made in Staffordshire since privatisation of the rail network in the late 1990s.

Figure 5: Summary of Typical Off-Peak Services at some Key Rail Stations



through Staffordshire – on the WCML towards Manchester Piccadilly and on the Birmingham to Derby line towards Nottingham/Sheffield and beyond.

London Midland services operate between Birmingham and Liverpool, via Stafford, and also on the London to Crewe route via Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent. London Midland also operates slower services into Birmingham from Rugeley Trent Valley (via the Chase Line), from Lichfield Trent Valley (via the Cross City Line) and from Shrewsbury calling at Codsall and Bilbrook.

Northern Rail operates hourly services from North Staffordshire to Manchester Piccadilly whilst Arriva Trains Wales operate a limited amount of services at Codsall, Bilbrook and Stafford.

Finally, East Midlands Trains operate services between Crewe and Derby, via Stoke-on-Trent and the North Staffordshire line.

However, the key challenges for Staffordshire are:

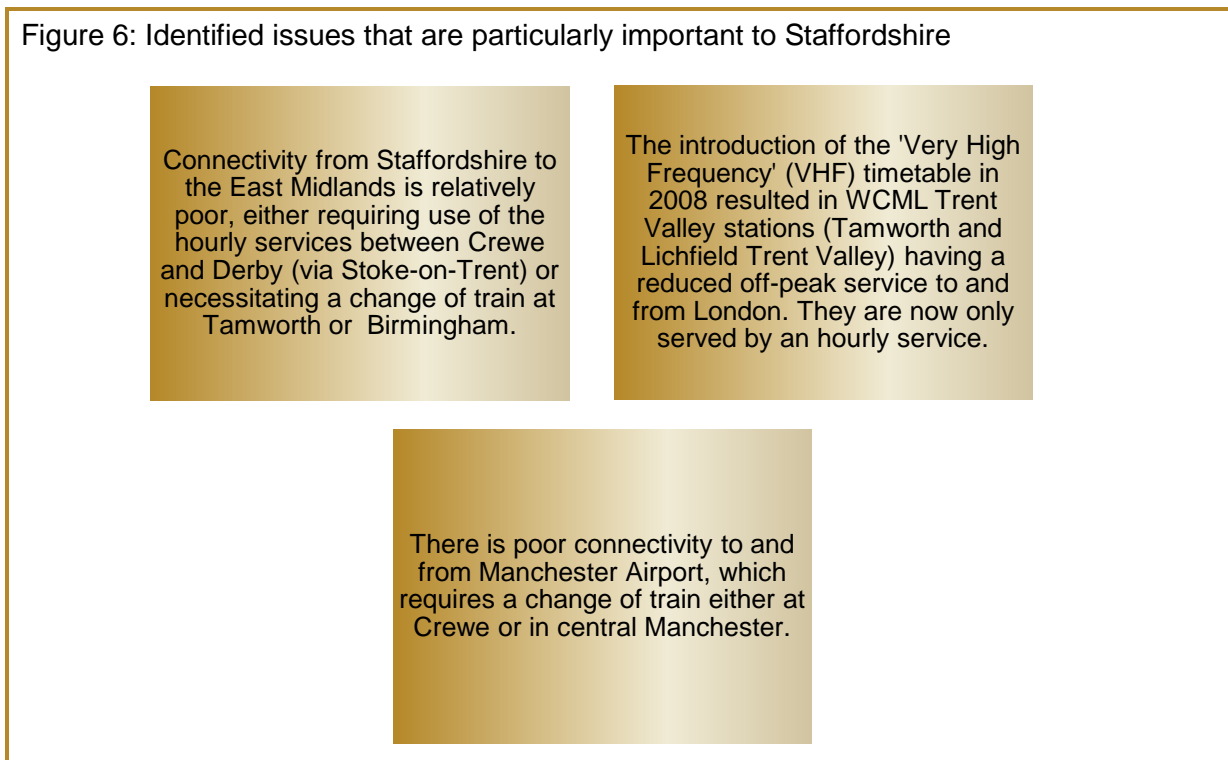
- Routes are generally two-track only, with the exception of the WCML.
- There is typically a mix of slow (stopping) and fast passenger services and freight trains using the network.

This means that the network is increasingly busy and a number of 'pinch points' exist which will limit service development in the future.

**Between 2007/08 and 2013/14 there was an increase of 71% in the number of people using Staffordshire's rail stations**

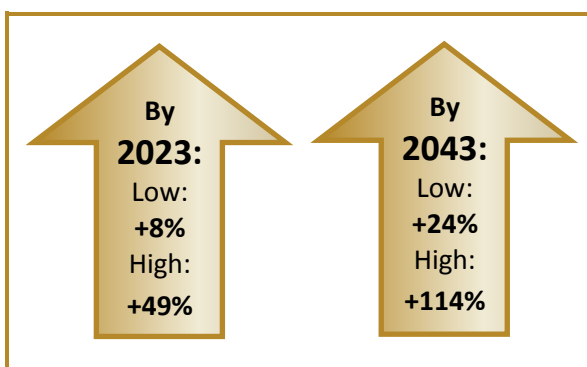
Figure 6 identifies some of the issues that are particularly important to Staffordshire (they are not exhaustive).

Figure 6: Identified issues that are particularly important to Staffordshire



**What is expected to happen in the future?**

The level of demand for rail travel is expected to increase significantly. Network Rail's Market Study for Regional Urban Centres, published in October 2013, suggests growth of between 8% and 49% for travel into both Birmingham and Manchester by 2023, rising to between 24% and 114% by 2043. This confirms the increasingly important roles the rail network will play in the future and demonstrates the need for continued investment in rail services and the associated network.



As part of the ongoing work for HS2, HS2 Ltd (established by the Government to develop the HS2 project) has prepared a 'Do Minimum' timetable which shows in broad terms how, without a high speed railway, improvements in the level of service on the WCML and other routes would be limited in the future. This 'Do Minimum' scenario shows that there may be only two paths for trains into London per hour on the WCML, one for an intercity service (hereafter referred to as ICWC) and for a London Midland type service. Although this work is only indicative, it clearly demonstrates that there is only very limited scope to improve the level of service on the WCML without the introduction of either a high speed railway or another similar upgrade.

A number of significant infrastructure upgrades are already planned for in Staffordshire. Table 1 describes a number of these upgrades.



Table 1: Planned rail infrastructure upgrades in Staffordshire.

Improvement	Importance to Staffordshire
<b>Stafford Area Improvements</b>	A number of improvements has already been made or are currently being implemented in the Stafford Area to increase capacity along the WCML. This includes raising the line speed on the slow lines, re-signalling, the provision of a new freight loop and the introduction of a new flyover at Norton Bridge (for completion in 2017) to remove a major conflict at the flat junction.
<b>Chase Line Upgrade</b>	The route between Walsall and Rugeley is not currently electrified and is largely operated by hourly diesel services. A significant upgrade of this route is planned, including electrification and a line speed increase. This will allow for half-hourly electric services to operate between Birmingham and Rugeley Trent Valley. In the longer term, if HS2 does proceed (releasing capacity in the Stafford area) there are aspirations for through trains to use this route, for example between Birmingham and Liverpool, or between Birmingham and Manchester. These trains could also be extended south of Birmingham.

In addition, to the planned network improvements in the Stafford/Norton Bridge area and on the Chase Line, a comprehensive list of potential network and service improvements has been identified for Staffordshire, which includes opportunities for line speed increases, further electrification, capacity enhancements and enhanced connectivity. This is shown in Figure 14, Page 33.

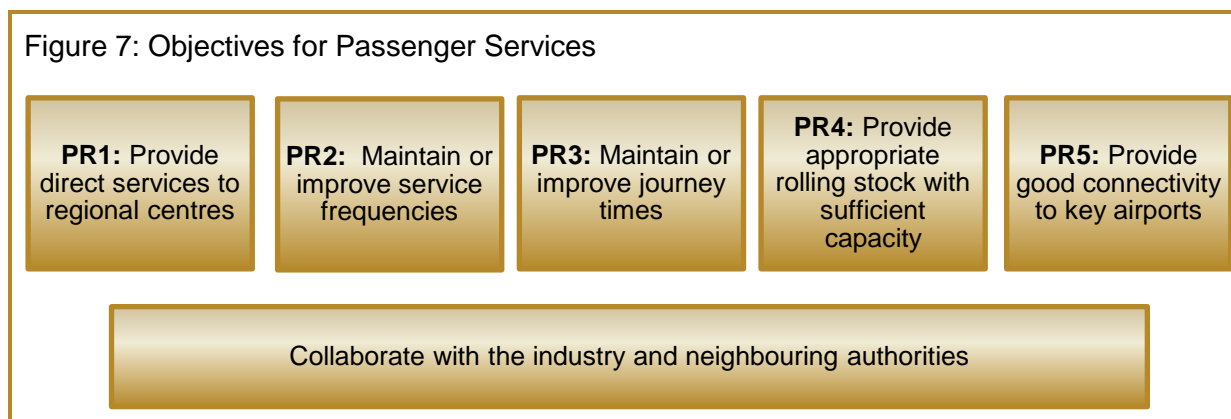
A key bottleneck, which is outside of Staffordshire but has a major impact on services, is Water Orton. This strategically important section of network is heavily trafficked with a number of conflicting movements. Whilst HS2 may offer some limited relief (through allowing 'fast' services from Birmingham to North-East England to re-route to the high speed railway following Phase 2), there would still be a large number of trains in the area. Upgrade works, including new signalling, were included in the

Government's High Level Output Strategy (HLOS) but are no longer included in the plans for the current Control Period (CP5: 2014-2019). Staffordshire will continue to support and work with the industry regarding this scheme and the need for it to be introduced as soon as possible, preferably either prior to, or within, the next Control Period (CP6: 2019-2024).

**What are the objectives for passenger services?**

There are five core objectives for passenger services in the county, all of which are underpinned by the need to collaborate with the industry and neighbouring authorities. These objectives recognise the importance of passengers being able to travel where they need to, at a time that is convenient to them, whether it is for employment, leisure or other purposes.

Figure 7: Objectives for Passenger Services



Working towards these objectives will promote economic growth within Staffordshire and the surrounding areas, as well as promoting carbon friendly rail use as an alternative to the private car, reducing the negative environmental impacts of car travel on Staffordshire.

Objective PR4 recognises that there are some services in Staffordshire which are running at or above capacity, with some passengers being left behind at stations due to insufficient train lengths, including stations along the North Staffordshire Line. This is a significant concern for both the County Council and the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership and requires attention. Both partners are working with the rail industry and Government to try and identify an acceptable solution. Objective PR5 recognises, in both economic and leisure terms, the importance of good connectivity to key airports in neighbouring regions.

**How should these objectives be realised?**

The County Council will continue to support and work with the rail industry regarding improvements to the rail network to enable services to be improved in the future regardless of whether HS2 is built. When considering improvements, the benefit to the rail network is often cumulative, in that one project may strengthen the business case for an important improvement elsewhere, requiring an holistic approach.

The County Council, therefore, supports the improvements outlined in Table 2, some of which are located entirely outside of Staffordshire as they will bring potential benefits to the county in the future. However, it is important that any negative implications these improvements may have on rail freight are considered and mitigated against wherever possible.

Table 2: Proposed improvements to the rail network that may bring potential benefits to Staffordshire

Scheme	Description	Passenger Rail Services Objectives				
		PR1	PR2	PR3	PR4	PR5
<b>Electrification of Cross Country Network</b>	Electrification of the Birmingham to Derby line, which passes through the east of Staffordshire, would allow for services to be operated electrically, giving the potential for faster services to be operated. In addition, acceleration can allow for extra station calls to be added.	✓	✓	✓		
<b>Northern Hub, Manchester</b>	This scheme makes a number of improvements in the Manchester area, providing significantly increased capacity at Manchester Piccadilly and providing better opportunities for ‘through’ services from the south to continue beyond Manchester, for example to Bolton and Preston. Given the large number of journeys made from Staffordshire to the Manchester area, Staffordshire County Council strongly supports this scheme and the extra capacity that it provides.	✓	✓	✓		✓

Scheme	Description	Passenger Rail Services Objectives				
		PR1	PR2	PR3	PR4	PR5
<b>East-West Rail</b>	This scheme is located some distance away from Staffordshire, but may still offer benefits to the area. The scheme sees the re-opening of the rail network between Bicester and Milton Keynes, which will allow services from Manchester, for example, to have much faster journey times to the South Coast, running via the WCML and Bicester rather than via Birmingham. This should provide significantly faster services to the South of England from Staffordshire. It is important for the County Council to lobby for those services that use the East-West Rail Route from Manchester to the South of England to stop and serve Staffordshire.			✓		
<b>Crossrail</b>	This is a large scheme to introduce a new west-east rail route through Central London from Reading.	✓		✓		✓

The County Council will continue to work closely with the TOCs to seek improvements to Staffordshire’s rail services. This includes working with East Midlands Trains to address the capacity issues along the North Staffordshire Line between Crewe and Derby. This will help address the acute overcrowding which currently exists and contribute to the provision of better connectivity between Staffordshire and the East Midlands. Re-signalling along the North Staffordshire Line is planned by Network Rail during CP5. This will also facilitate the opportunity for the provision of earlier and later running passenger services.

The future development of new local passenger services serving Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent could bring greater connectivity. These services would operate into Birmingham Moor Street, via new chords at Bordesley and possible new stations, for example at Fort Dunlop. If stations were to be re-introduced between Birmingham City Centre and Kings Norton, there may also be scope for through services to operate, for example between Tamworth and Worcester. However, this scheme is intrinsically linked with the provision of the new route for freight services through the West Midlands via Stourbridge and Walsall. It is an aspiration

of the County Council to see improved connectivity for Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent, provided it does not adversely impact on rail freight and other services that operate along the route.

Good connectivity to airports is key for Staffordshire’s economic wellbeing and hence forms one of the five objectives. Access to Manchester Airport from Staffordshire is currently relatively poor, with no direct services. The County Council, along with other local authorities and partners, have been investigating various possibilities for the provision of a direct service to be provided from Staffordshire. This is also a key aim of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP and is included within their SEP. It is also regularly cited by the Chamber of Commerce as being an issue for business. Possible options include the extension of services currently operated by both East Midlands Trains and London Midland which currently terminate at Crewe.

Connectivity to Birmingham Airport varies considerably according to where an individual is located within Staffordshire. There is currently an hourly through train from Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent but many journeys from other stations within

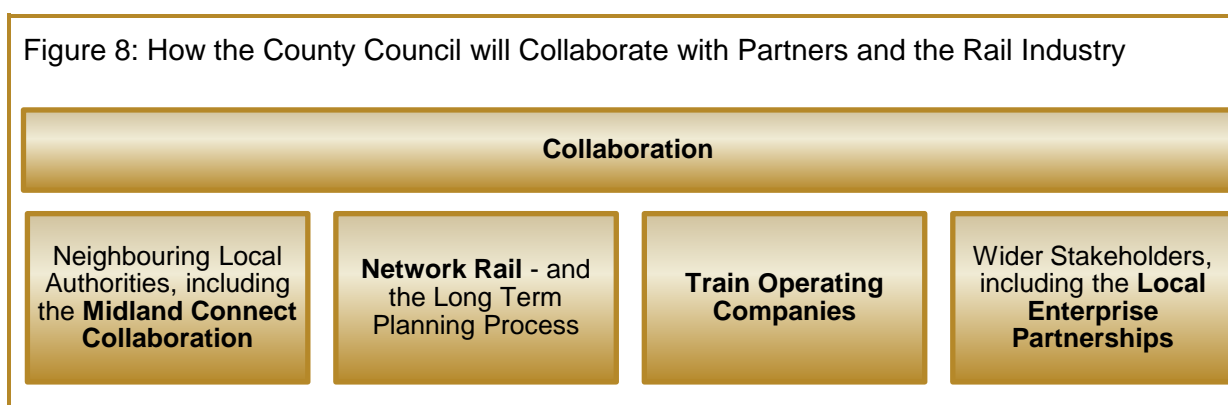
Staffordshire require interchanging at Birmingham New Street. The County Council will seek opportunities, wherever possible, for increased through services to Birmingham Airport.

North Western Railway Company Ltd), provided these are not to the detriment of existing station stops or journey times in Staffordshire.

In seeking direct services to regional centres (Objective PR1), the County Council supports new services that are proposed by open access operators (for example, the recent proposal by Grand

Finally, continued collaboration is essential if Staffordshire is to maximise future improvement opportunities. Figure 8 shows how the County Council will continue to build relationships and work in partnership with relevant stakeholders and the rail industry.

Figure 8: How the County Council will Collaborate with Partners and the Rail Industry



**What are the timescales for action and collaboration?**

Short Term: 2014-2019	Medium Term: 2020-2030	Long Term: Beyond 2030
Support and seek to maximise opportunities associated with planned improvements both within and outside Staffordshire. This includes Norton Bridge Flyover and Chase Line upgrade.	Lobby and work in collaboration with partners for improvements to the Water Orton area to be at least funded and undertaken within the next Control Period (CP6: 2019-2024).	Continue to work closely with the rail industry, including Network Rail and the TOCs to review and identify opportunities for improvement to the rail services and the rail network.
Support Network Rail in its Long Term Planning Process – currently focusing on Route Studies.		
Support the increased electrification of the wider rail network, including the Cross Country network.		
Continue to work actively with partners on the proposals for rail devolution in the North and West Midlands and any other such proposals in the future.		
To work with the rail industry and stakeholders to influence the provision of future rail services in Staffordshire through the re-franchising process.		



## 4. High Speed 2 (HS2) and HS2 Local Connectivity

### What is happening now?

HS2 Ltd has been established by the Government to develop HS2 in response to growing concerns in the industry regarding the ability for the WCML and other key north-south railways in the UK to handle future demand for rail travel.

Phase One of HS2 would see a dedicated high speed railway from London as far north as Birmingham which connects into the WCML at Handsacre in Lichfield. Starting in London, there would be intermediate stations at Old Oak Common (for interchange with Crossrail services) and Birmingham Interchange (for Birmingham Airport and the NEC). Phase Two is anticipated to consist of two separate routes to the north. At the time of writing, the initial preferred route north of Lichfield has been recommended by the Chair of HS2 Ltd, Sir David Higgins, to travel via Crewe towards the North-West of England. The eastern route will continue to Sheffield and Leeds via an East Midlands Hub.

A Hybrid Bill has been deposited to Parliament for Phase One; once the Bill receives Royal Assent, it will secure the necessary powers needed to construct and maintain the railway. Detailed examination of the Bill is now taking place. The expected project timescales are in Figure 9

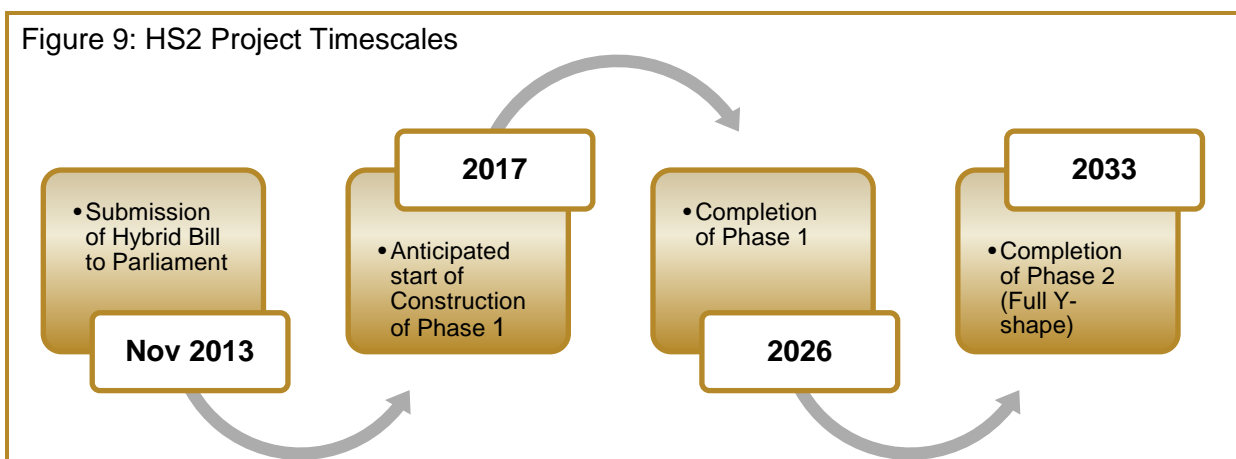
### What is expected to happen in the future?

The County Council does not support the HS2 Project and has therefore, developed six key tests against which all aspects of the HS2 project are being assessed, in order to mitigate the impact of HS2, whilst trying to secure the best deal for Staffordshire and its communities. This Strategy specifically develops in greater detail four of those key tests:

#### Does the Project:

- Provide the best opportunities to increase Staffordshire's prosperity?
- Provide the best opportunities for improving existing rail services, especially the WCML services?
- Provide the greatest capacity for the transfer of freight from road to rail?
- Provide the best possible opportunities for Staffordshire's Community to gain access to the existing and future National and European High Speed Passenger Network?

Figure 9: HS2 Project Timescales



Published documentation suggests that:

- There will be a new faster service from Stafford station which is to be served by 'classic compatible' high speed trains. Such trains/services will use the high speed railway from London as far north as Handsacre Junction (close to Lichfield), at which point the 'class' network (conventional railway) would be used.
- Whilst the removal of long-distance services could potentially lead to reduced long-distance connectivity on the classic network, a significant amount of capacity will also be released on the WCML and ultimately other north-south routes in the UK such as the Midland Mainline and East Coast Main Line. This will open up new operating possibilities enabling higher frequencies or new 'through' trains to destinations not currently served by direct services.
- existing classic ICWC service and a London Midland type service, representing an increase from 2tph to 3tph.
- Stoke-on-Trent is not shown to be served by a classic compatible Midland type service and there would be a reduction in the fast ICWC service to 1tph (down from 2tph). Stoke-on-Trent, therefore, does not appear to be as well served as it is currently, which is a cause for concern. The County Council's response to the HS2 Phase Two Route Consultation suggests that Stoke-on-Trent should be provided with a classic compatible service to and from London, in addition to the services on the classic network. Such a service could utilise the Handsacre Junction and is a recommendation put forward by Sir David Higgins in the recent Rebalancing Britain report.

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## Beyond the UK...

Initially, the suggestion was made by HS2 Ltd that there would be a single-track link between HS2 and the UK's existing high speed railway (HS1) between London St Pancras International and the Continent, via the Channel Tunnel. However, this plan has since been dismissed and we understand that HS2 Ltd is now investigating ways of providing better links for pedestrians between the two termini in London. This means that through trains between the West Midlands and beyond are unlikely to be able to run through onto HS1 in the foreseeable future.

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HS2 Ltd has published its initial view (The Economic Case for HS2 – PFM V4.3 – The Assumptions Report (HS2 Ltd) – October 2013) of potential service provision on both the new railway and the classic network. HS2 Ltd caveats this specification as it represents just one possible set of assumptions used for business case modelling purposes and should not be interpreted as a proposed service specification. This initial work suggests the following service provision, focussing here on links to London:

- Stafford would be served by an hourly classic compatible service to London, in addition to the
- The Trent Valley stations of Lichfield and Tamworth are shown to have a new ICWC service each hour, in addition to the London Midland type service. This is a clear example of the high speed railway providing released capacity on the classic network, and represents a doubling of frequency for the Trent Valley Stations, helping to facilitate local travel within Staffordshire but also providing more opportunity for regional or long-distance services.
- HS2 Ltd's work suggests that whilst some long-distance services (for example, Birmingham to

Leeds) would move onto the high speed railway, long-distance classic services would be retained on the Birmingham to Derby railway to serve demand for intermediate stations, with the potential for more stops at locations such as Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent, in addition to trains on the Nottingham to Birmingham/Cardiff line stopping at those stations.

Finally, following the Chase Line upgrade, there is opportunity for long- distance services between Birmingham and Stafford (and beyond) to use the Chase Line, opening up many new journey opportunities for stations such as Cannock and Rugeley Trent Valley. This is a shared aspiration with partners and is also highlighted in Network Rail’s recent ‘Better Connections’ Report

**What are the objectives for HS2 and HS2 local connectivity?**

As discussed earlier, the County Council does not support the HS2 project but is committed to working to mitigate the impact of HS2, whilst trying to secure the best deal for Staffordshire and its communities.

Therefore, to get the most benefit from the HS2 project the County Council has identified four specific objectives relating to HS2, which should be read in conjunction with the objectives outlined in both the passenger services and freight chapters. The objectives acknowledge the

need to secure classic compatible services for Staffordshire, whilst maximising the potential for improved rail connectivity from any released capacity on the classic network.

**How should these objectives be realised?**

**HS2-1: Secure classic compatible services in the county**

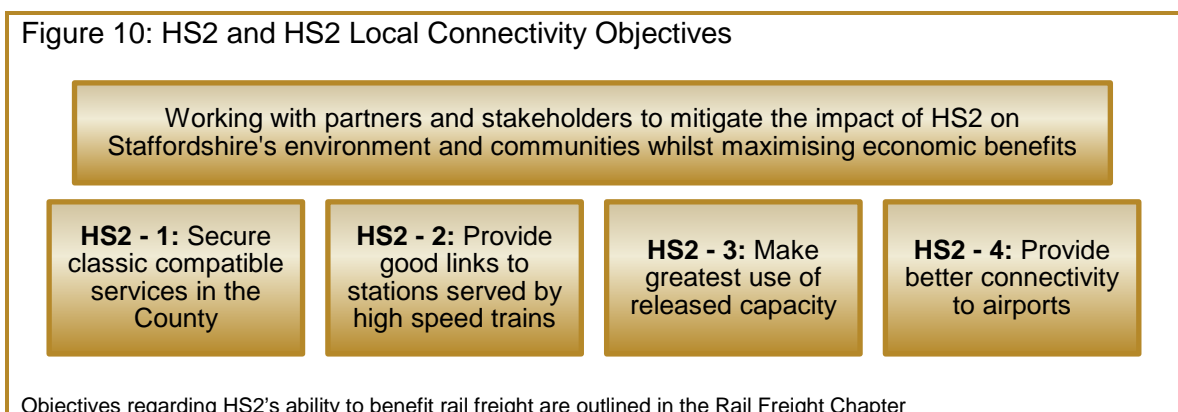
The County Council understands that the Hybrid Bill will give powers to construct the railway as outlined in the deposited plans which includes the Handsacre Junction at the WCML. While the matter of detailed service patterns will be the subject of a future consultation, the County Council understands from published documentation that Stafford would be served by a classic compatible service.

However, in order to maximise connectivity to the new high speed rail line, the authority outlined in its response to the Phase Two Route Consultation that the City of Stoke-on-Trent should also be provided with a classic compatible service which can make use of the infrastructure at Handsacre Junction. Such service could be extended to serve Macclesfield and Stockport.

**HS2-2: Provide good links to HS2 Stations**

The County Council believes that the new high speed railway should provide opportunities for all stations in Staffordshire and not just the key

Figure 10: HS2 and HS2 Local Connectivity Objectives



stations which may be served by new classic compatible high speed services. To maximise any released capacity, the County Council will try secure fast and frequent connections into stations that will be served either by dedicated high speed (termed 'captive') trains or classic compatible high speed trains. To do this effectively, the County Council will consider the location of each station in the county relative to both:

- The high speed hub stations – namely Birmingham (Curzon Street), Birmingham Interchange, Crewe and East Midlands Hub, both for journeys to the south (towards London) and to the north (towards Manchester via Crewe and towards Leeds); or
- The stations which may be served either by classic compatible high speed services or faster classic services.

The County Council will work with HS2 Ltd, Network Rail and other local authorities to ensure that travel connections are considered. To do this, the County Council will need to review this work as more details emerge regarding the level of service in the future. Taking the example of Uttoxeter on the North Staffordshire Line, to maximise opportunities for fast travel to London, the County Council's emphasis would be on passengers being able to easily access Stoke-on-Trent for connecting services to London.

It is hoped that this will include classic compatible high speed services which will offer an improvement on current journey times. For journeys to the North-West, the County Council's focus will be on providing better access to both Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe, allowing the respective use of either classic or HS2 services. For journeys to the North-East, emphasis will be on providing better links to Derby (for classic services) and the East Midlands Hub (for HS2 services). However, the County Council will review this work when more details regarding the proposed

service specification for both the HS2 and classic network are provided by HS2 Ltd. This will enable the County Council to decide on how best to improve connectivity from Staffordshire's stations.

### **HS2-3: Making the greatest use of released capacity**

The County Council is now working with Network Rail as part of an industry planning group, to determine the optimum use for the classic network following the development of HS2. The County Council will try to ensure that:

- The Chase Line can be used for a longer distance travel route, as earlier mentioned, giving the possibility for services to route between Stafford and Birmingham via one of two routes, giving considerable new journey opportunities. For example, direct services from Cannock to Liverpool or Manchester could be offered.
- Better frequencies are provided through the Trent Valley, partly restoring the service which existed prior to the VHF timetable in 2008.
- There are additional stops at Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent for long-distance services to the North of England. The County Council envisages this being possible as a result of the demand for 'fast' services between the West Midlands and East Midlands/North of England being taken up by HS2.
- The County Council has a shared aspiration with partners for suburban trains to run in addition to current long-distance services between Tamworth and Birmingham Moor Street, giving clear benefits to Tamworth but also intermediate stations such as Wilnecote. The extension of this service further north towards Burton-upon-Trent and possibly



Derby would provide clear additional benefits to the eastern side of the county.

#### **HS2-4: Provide better connectivity to airports**

HS2 gives the opportunity to increase the level of service to and from key airports. It also aligns with Manchester Airport's Ground Transport Plan and Birmingham Airport's Surface Access Strategy which both aim to increase arrivals to their respective airport by rail travel.

Over and above the aspirations outlined earlier in this document, the County Council believes that HS2 may improve connectivity to airports in the following ways:

- Manchester Airport is expected to receive a dedicated station on Phase Two of the railway. If the initial preferred route is taken forward to Crewe, a change at Crewe would provide opportunities for faster and more convenient journeys from Staffordshire. In addition, the released capacity on the classic network is likely to service extensions, such as the East Midlands Trains service which terminates at Crewe, more workable.
- Earlier it was stated that Heathrow Airport is relatively difficult to reach by train from Staffordshire, but this has the potential to be improved upon following completion of HS2. HS2 classic compatible services

would stop at Old Oak Common en route to London Euston, where a connection with frequent Crossrail trains to Heathrow Airport would be offered.

- HS2 also offers the opportunity for improved connectivity between Staffordshire and Birmingham Airport. For example, some high speed classic compatible services would stop at Birmingham Interchange, with an estimated travel time of 20 minutes when compared to 40 minutes at present. Upon arrival at Birmingham Interchange, a people mover transit system is expected to provide direct access to Birmingham Airport (along with the NEC and Birmingham International Rail Station). In addition, there are aspirations in the West Midlands for an existing Cross Country service between Newcastle and Reading to route via Birmingham International, which may offer direct connections between stations such as Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent to Birmingham Airport.

#### **What are the timescales for actions and collaboration?**

The County Council's actions in regard to HS2 are ongoing, and the Council will continue to respond as and when new information is provided by HS2 Ltd. The Authority's timescales and actions are set out on the following page:

Short Term: 2014-2019	Medium Term: 2020-2030	Long Term: Beyond 2030
To ensure that the construction of the Handsacre Junction and associated infrastructure is contained within the Hybrid Bill upon Royal Assent. This will ensure that classic compatible high speed services can be provided at Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent rail stations.	To ensure that the Handsacre Junction and associated infrastructure is constructed. This will facilitate classic compatible high speed services serving Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent rail stations.	
Work to seek assurance that capacity on the WCML will not be reduced once Phase One becomes operational.	Monitor capacity of the WCML once Phase One of HS2 becomes operational and work with the industry to try and ensure that any impacts on Staffordshire's rail services are minimised.	Monitor and review rail services following completion of HS2 and work with the rail industry to try and secure improvements to connectivity where required.
Work with partners to review and develop plans that improve connectivity to rail stations which are served by either classic compatible services or captive high speed services.	Secure funding to deliver necessary station improvements and connectivity improvements to stations with released capacity and/or new classic compatible or captive high speed services.	
Work to seek assurance that the WCML will not be severely disrupted during the construction of Phase One.	Monitor performance of the WCML during construction of HS2 and work with the industry to ensure that journey times and capacity are not negatively impacted upon.	
Review opportunities for released capacity and new rail services on the classic network.	Work with the industry to secure desired train service patterns that will ensure the best possible provision for Staffordshire.	Monitor and review train service patterns and secure changes as required.
Ensure that emerging proposals will not inhibit the growth of rail freight in the future (see Rail Freight Chapter).		

## 5. Rail Stations as Gateways

### What is happening now?

The quality of rail stations can have an important effect on enabling growth of an area due to their role as gateways into towns and cities.

The experience of arriving at an area by rail can greatly affect people's perception of an area. Poorly designed, rundown buildings and their hinterland can have a negative impact.

*“A high quality, well designed station can improve the image of the location it serves, making it more attractive as a place to live, work and invest” (Steer Davies Gleave, The Value of Station Investment, 2011)*

As rail stations are often the first place that visitors and businesses see when they enter Staffordshire by rail, they need to be welcoming, give good first impressions, be functional and give passengers all the information they need in an easy and accessible way for them to continue their journey.

Staffordshire currently has nineteen operational rail stations and three stations that are non-operational (Barlaston, Wedgwood and Norton Bridge rail stations) and are served by a rail replacement bus service. A further three stations which serve the residents of North Staffordshire are

located within the city of Stoke-on-Trent (Stoke-on-Trent, Longton and Longport rail stations) and finally, one rail station is located on the Derbyshire/Staffordshire border which serves the residents at Tutbury and Hatton. However, residents use many more in surrounding areas. Figure 4 on page 8 shows the location of rail stations in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

All stations are classified into six categories (A-F) based on passenger footfall and income. This classification is used by Network Rail to manage asset condition, maintenance, renewals and for prioritising passenger enhancements.

Staffordshire currently has:

- Two 'C' class stations
- Two 'D' class stations
- Three 'E' class stations
- Thirteen 'F' class stations

It is widely recognised that classes of station at category 'C' and below fall short of the average satisfaction level. Due to earlier franchise processes, many stations have now become dependent upon funding opportunities such as the National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP) and the Access for All Funding. In recent years investment through these funding streams has been used to improve a number of rail stations in Staffordshire. These improvements have been wide ranging and examples are included in Table 3.

Table 3: Recent improvements made to Staffordshire Rail Stations

Station	Improvements
Tamworth	Glazing of stairwells and platform waiting areas to help with weatherproofing, CIS installation on platforms, CCTV and lighting improvements, redecoration of concourse and booking hall, new access built to the lift on Platform 1, increased car parking and additional cycle provision.

<b>Landywood Cannock Hednesford Rugeley Town</b>	Replacement of platform shelters with induction loops, provision of new CCTV systems, installation of station entrance artwork and various building improvements.
<b>Burton-upon-Trent (Tranche 1)</b>	Removal of asbestos in station buildings, improved lighting to station buildings, modernisation of station buildings at both street level and platform level, refurbishment of waiting room, staff office and toilets, including a new fully accessible toilet at platform level.
<b>Lichfield Trent Valley</b>	The provision of a new station building to provide a new ticket office, waiting room and information facilities for customers together with a new 120 space car park.
<b>Uttoxeter</b>	Provision of an individual garden and waiting area called Uttoxeter Station Heritage Garden, the provision of an accessible footbridge, cycle storage, passenger waiting facilities, CCTV, CIS, permanent station mural and welcome sign.

### What is expected to happen in the future?

The demand for rail travel is only expected to keep on increasing significantly and, therefore, rail stations risk becoming a victim of their own success. In addition, many stations do not meet today's passenger needs and expectations.

**In 2012/13 over 10.1 million passengers used rail stations in Staffordshire and station growth increased by 71% between 2006/07 and 2013/14 compared to 39% nationally.**

A detailed assessment of the quality of passenger facilities currently available at all of Staffordshire's rail stations has been undertaken to help target future investment. This assessment is available in the suite of technical documents at [www.Staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/railstrategy.aspx](http://www.Staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/transportplanning/localtransportplan/railstrategy.aspx)

This assessment has identified a number of stations within Staffordshire that require improvements to be made to the station environment and include such things as improved access to the station, improved waiting facilities, additional car parking and stations being made fully accessible.

*“Successful railway station will add to the passenger experience social and environmental benefits of rail. Integration with other modes and the surrounding area can provide for an end-to-end journey experience that makes sustainable transport an attractive alternative to private vehicle usage” (Network Rail, Network RUS, Stations)*

Network Rail's Stations RUS demonstrates the need for continued investment in our rail stations. Significant investment to upgrade a number of Staffordshire's rail stations is already planned for delivery during Control Period 5 (2014-2019). Table 4 describes these planned works in greater detail.

In addition to these planned investments, a number of further gateway improvements have been identified for Staffordshire's stations and these are shown on Figure 14, Page 32.

However, in order to maximise the investment opportunities available for rail stations, the County Council will need to work closely with the rail industry and partners whilst seeking innovative ways of delivery, for example through community

rail partnerships and rail devolution. Community rail partnerships are grassroot organisations which link local railways more closely with local communities to achieve common goals. DfT strongly supports the expansion of community rail partnerships as they help to get better value for money from the rail network. The County Council is a member

of the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership. and strongly supports the expansion of such partnerships. In addition, the County Council will continue to support and work in partnership with the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership to build on the successes the partnership has already achieved.

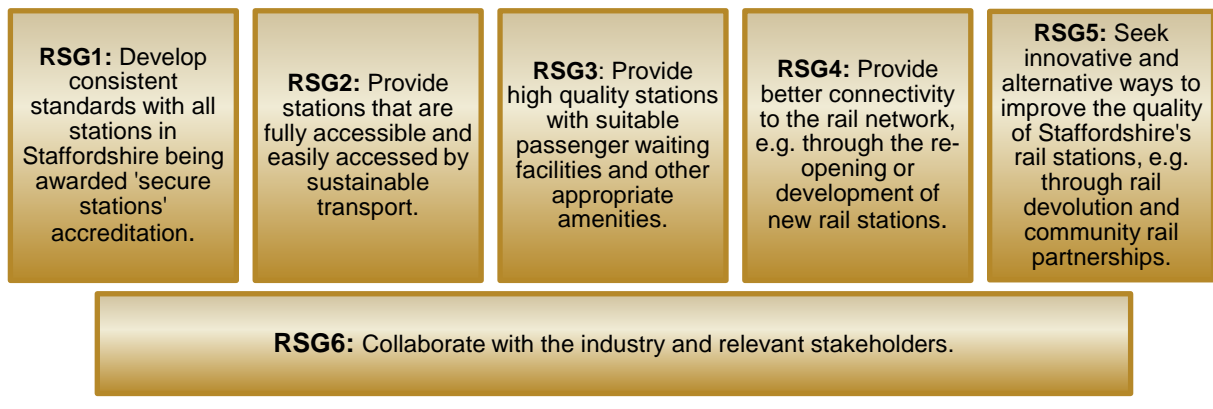
Table 4: Planned Investment at Staffordshire Rail Stations

Scheme	Description	Rail Station as Gateways Objectives				
		RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
<b>Lichfield Trent Valley Access for All</b>	Lichfield Trent Valley Rail Station was successfully nominated for Access for All Funding to deliver a scheme during CP5 (2014-2019) that will make the Station fully accessible to all passengers.		✓	✓		✓
<b>Kidsgrove Transport Hub</b>	A successful joint bid was submitted for Access for All funding to deliver a scheme during CP5 (2014-2019) that will make the Station fully accessible to all passengers. This is part of a wider jointly funded regeneration scheme which will provide improved passenger facilities, additional car parking and help realise the aspiration of Kidsgrove becoming a transport hub.		✓	✓		✓
<b>Access to Jobs, Training and Services in Tamworth</b>	Successful bids for Local Sustainable Transport Funding and Local Growth Funding were submitted to DfT and the Local Enterprise Partnership. This project will help build upon the NSIP work already completed at Tamworth Rail Station and will deliver forecourt improvements, enhanced signage and lighting and information maps, the expansion of pedestrian areas, improved footways and crossings and public realm in the vicinity of the station. Connectivity between the rail station and the town centre will also be improved along with targeted rail marketing. This is part of a much wider sustainable connectivity project.		✓	✓		✓



## What are the objectives for rail stations?

Figure 11: Objectives for Rail Stations



There are five core objectives for rail stations in Staffordshire, all of which are underpinned by the need to collaborate with the rail industry and relevant stakeholders. These objectives recognise the importance that rail stations play in a passenger's journey and how they should be welcoming, functional, accessible and safe. Developing consistent standards for stations in Staffordshire will help to ensure that the county's rail stations positively add to a passenger's experience whilst supporting the economic, social and environmental benefits that rail brings.

Achieving secure stations accreditation will help to ensure the provision of a safe railway environment for passengers and station employees by reducing crime and disorder and help increase public confidence. This is especially the case at stations that are currently unstaffed.

Providing opportunities for better connectivity to the rail network, for example through the re-opening or development of new rail stations, recognises the aspirations for more people to be able to easily access the rail network. This includes improving accessibility to the rail network between Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent.

Objective RSG5 recognises that in order to be able to successfully deliver value for money solutions, innovative and

alternative ways will need to be sought. The County Council is already successfully working in partnership with the rail industry, stakeholders and the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership to deliver the Kidsgrove Transport Hub.

### How should these objectives be realised?

The County Council will continue to support and work in partnership with the rail industry regarding improvements to rail stations in Staffordshire. Improvements to stations that are located outside of Staffordshire may also bring potential wider benefits to the county. For example, capacity improvements at a rail station located outside Staffordshire may mean that an aspiration to extend a service from Staffordshire would be able to be accommodated. In addition, many of Staffordshire's residents also use rail stations that are located outside of the county. For these reasons the County Council will support station improvements that may bring wider benefits to Staffordshire.

The County Council will also continue to work closely with Network Rail and Government to ensure Staffordshire's aspirations for its rail stations are recognised within their Long Term Planning Process. This will help to ensure

that Staffordshire’s stations are planned for and fit for purpose in the long term. Stations are being considered within individual route studies.

Identifying innovative and alternative solutions to deliver improvements to Staffordshire’s rail stations is essential if funding is to be maximised and value for money achieved. The County Council recognises the benefits from community rail partnerships and sees the North Staffordshire CRP as an example of good practice which it would like to emulate elsewhere. Such stations that may benefit from a community rail partnership approach include Stone, Codsall, Bilbrook and rail stations along the Chase Line.

The County Council is also working in partnership on proposals for rail devolution in the North and also in the West Midlands. In the West Midlands, Staffordshire is working in partnership with 13 other local transport authorities and its

proposals will include the examination of alternative rail station delivery models.

The County Council will continue to work closely with Station Facility Operators to identify improvements and take advantage of relevant national and local funding opportunities wherever possible. The County Council will also work to ensure that projects that do receive funding are successfully delivered. The County Council is currently working closely with partners including East Midlands Trains, Network Rail and North Staffordshire CRP to deliver the regeneration project at Kidsgrove Rail Station.

Finally, if the County Council is to achieve its aspirations for rail stations in Staffordshire, continued collaboration is essential and the County Council will continue to build upon existing relationships and build new ones to maximise rail station investment.

**What are the current timescales for action and collaboration?**

Short Term: 2014-2019	Medium Term: 2020-2030	Long Term: Beyond 2030
Work with the rail industry and partners to establish consistent standards for rail stations in Staffordshire.	Work with partners and the rail industry to encourage business/ community use of unused station buildings to breathe vitality back into Staffordshire’s stations.	Continue to work closely with the rail industry, including Network Rail and the TOCs to review and identify opportunities for improvement to rail stations.
Support Network Rail in its Long Term Planning Process – currently focusing on Route Studies.	Support the rail industry and partners in identifying future suitable access to the rail network, e.g. through the re-opening of stations or the development of new stations where there is a clear business case and scope for those stations to be served by at least an hourly train service.	
Work with the rail industry, Government and partners to ensure wherever possible that Staffordshire’s rail stations are accessible, have suitable waiting facilities and other appropriate amenities.		
Continue to work actively with partners on the proposals for rail devolution in the North and West Midlands and any other such proposals in the future.		
Work with the rail industry and stakeholders to influence the quality of rail stations in Staffordshire through the re-franchising process.		
Work with the rail industry towards all rail stations in Staffordshire being awarded ‘secure stations’ accreditation.		
Work with the rail industry and partners to identify innovative and alternative ways for improving the quality of Staffordshire’s rail stations, e.g. through community rail partnerships		
Work with the rail industry and partners to identify and take advantage of any funding opportunities that improve Staffordshire’s station offer, e.g. through Access for All, Local Growth Fund and NSIP.		

## 6. Rail Freight

### What is happening now?

Rail freight plays a crucial role in the UK economy and, since privatisation in the 1990s, has grown significantly. Network Rail's Freight Market Study shows that the amount of freight moved by rail, measured in tonne kilometres, has grown at around 2.5% per annum. It recognises that Britain has become an economy which imports a wide range of goods, much of which comes through the major ports.

Rail freight has performed well during the recent recession, with a continued increase between 2009 and 2012.



The WCML, passing through Staffordshire, is a busy mixed use railway, handling a large number of freight movements each day, most of which pass through the county en route to destinations elsewhere. The Birmingham to Derby corridor is the other key route within Staffordshire for rail freight flows. With trains to terminals such as Hams Hall, Birch Coppice, Crewe Basford Hall and Kingsbury (all of which are located outside Staffordshire but are nonetheless important sources of freight close to the county) using this part of the network, it puts a strain on the capacity of the route in Staffordshire. The largest generator of rail freight traffic in the county in recent years

is Rugeley Power Station, which is served by freight trains from a number of UK ports. Figure 12 shows the key rail freight routes and terminals that affect Staffordshire.

### What is expected to happen in the future?

The Market Study includes demand forecasts on a 10, 20 and 30 year planning horizon, with forecasts by sector provided for 2023, 2033 and 2043. Network Rail acknowledges forecasting freight demand is complex and can often be based on broad global and national trends in the economy, where costs of transport on the national railway network may not be the primary driver of industrial decision making.

The expected change per annum in the overall rail freight market, in tonne kilometres, to 2043. This mainly reflects growth in the intermodal and biomass sectors but takes account of a long-term decline in coal traffic.

**+2.9%**  
*per annum*

### What are the objectives for rail freight?

Rail freight is more environmentally friendly than moving goods by road. Per tonne conveyed, rail freight produces 76% less carbon dioxide than road freight, with each freight train potentially taking 60 HGVs off the road network. The County Council advocates supporting existing rail and freight flows and encouraging new ones where they can provide a clear benefit to the county or the wider regional economy. The County Council's objectives are identified in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Key Rail Freight Network and Terminals

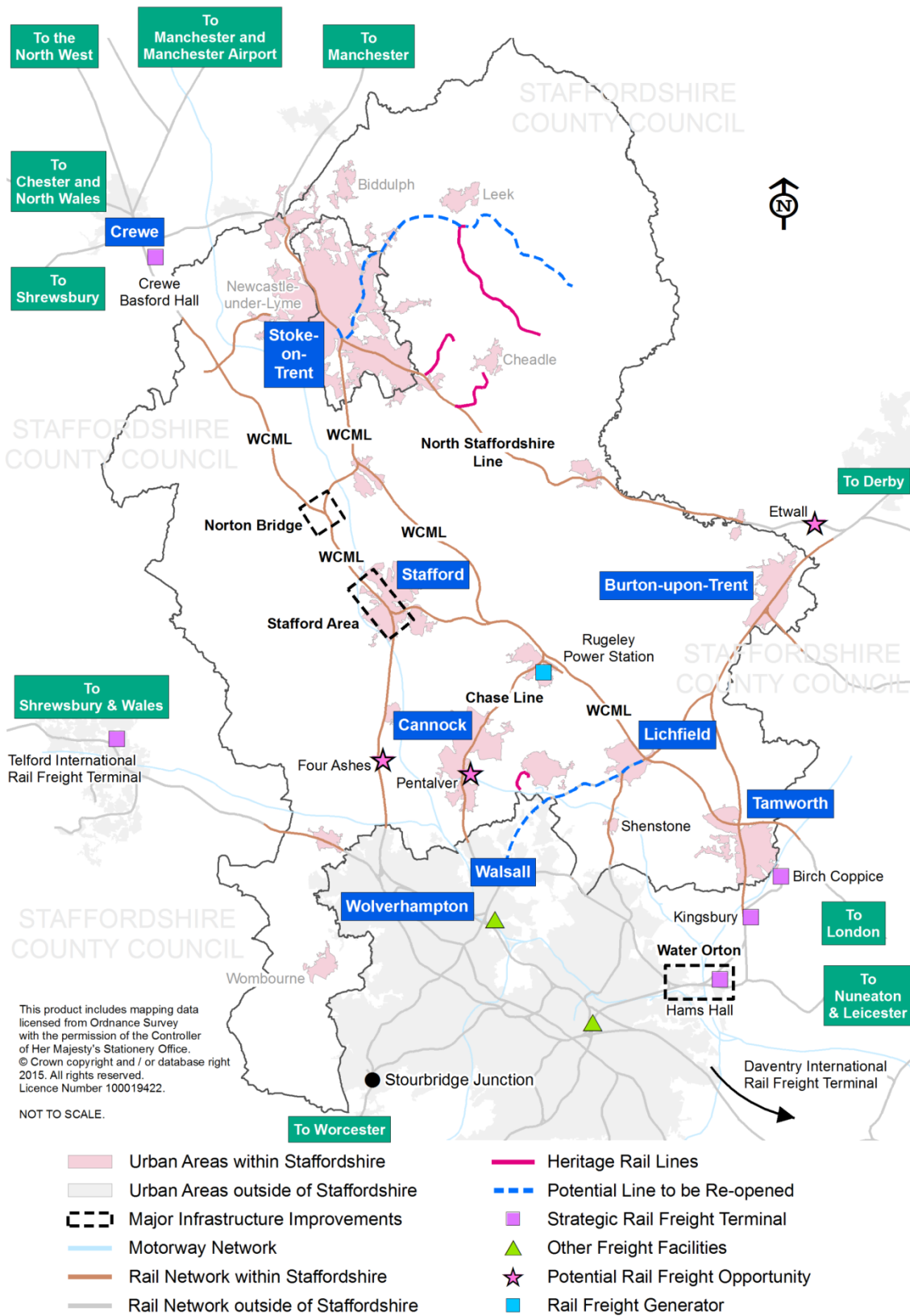
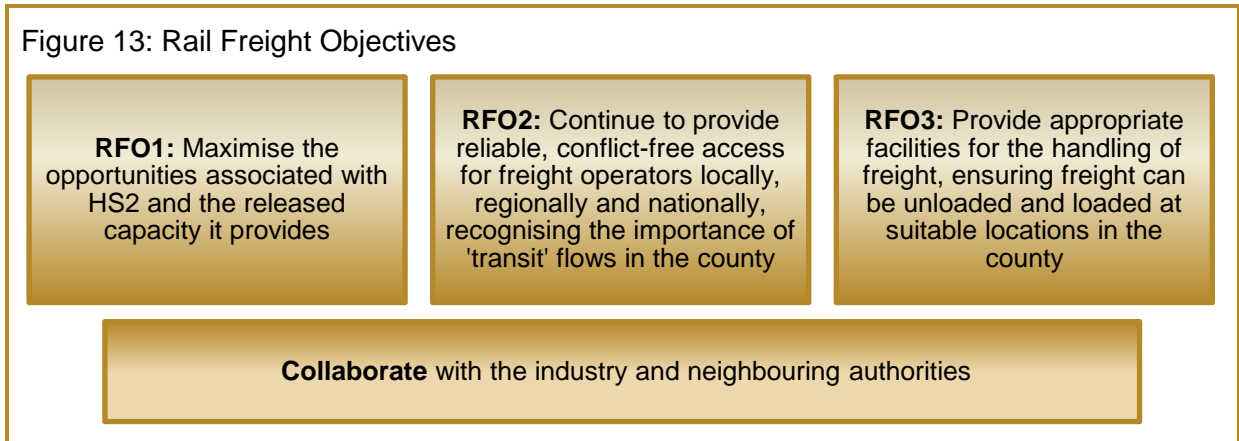


Figure 13: Rail Freight Objectives



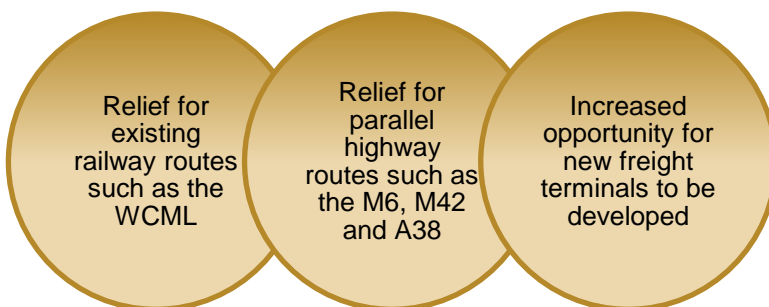
**How should these objectives be realised?**

**RFO1: Maximise the opportunities associated with HS2 and the released capacity it provides**

Whilst the County Council does not support the HS2 project it is committed to working to mitigate the impact of HS2, whilst trying to secure the best deal for Staffordshire and its communities. This includes ensuring economic growth.

In broad terms, the transfer of fast services such as those operated by Virgin Trains, to the high speed railway offers opportunities for rail freight not only in Staffordshire but in counties along the whole length of the WCML and beyond.

The western arm of the Y-shaped network has opportunity to provide additional capacity for freight services to run on the WCML, which will in turn reduce the stress on the parallel M6 Motorway (and M6 Toll) through the county, which carries a large number of HGVs. The eastern arm of the Y-shaped network could offer some capacity relief for the busy railway



between Birmingham and Derby and reduce stress on the M42 and A38 corridors. HS2 could provide the opportunity for more new rail freight terminals to be located in or close to the county on the classic network.

According to the rail freight industry, in rail freight terms alone, the best option in terms of route and phasing would be for HS2 Phase One (as outlined in the initial preferred route) to extend as far north as Crewe, as outlined in the Sir David Higgins Report – Rebalancing Britain. This would offer some immediate relief for the section of the WCML through Staffordshire for freight services. Discussion with the Rail Freight Group suggests that if HS2 Phase One were to extend only as far north as Handsacre Junction (in line with the original proposal by HS2 Ltd), then the intervening period between Phase One and the full Y-shaped network being developed may cause problems for rail freight, in that there would be significant competition for track capacity on the WCML north of Lichfield.

Taking account of Staffordshire's passenger service aspirations outlined earlier, the rail industry's optimum outcome would, therefore, see Phase One extend further north to a proposed interchange station at Crewe but with retention of the chord at Handsacre Junction.



A new industry planning group, led by Network Rail, has been launched to consider optimal uses for track capacity on the classic network, including the WCML through Staffordshire. The County Council is involved in these discussions to ensure that Staffordshire’s aspirations are met.

**RFO2: Continue to provide reliable, conflict-free access for freight operators locally, regionally and nationally, recognising the importance of ‘transit’ flows in the county**

The County Council supports measures to improve the throughput of rail freight

across Staffordshire and the wider West Midlands. When considering improvements, the benefit to the railway is across Staffordshire and the wider West Midlands often cumulative, in that one project may strengthen the business case for an improvement elsewhere, and so on, requiring an ‘holistic approach’. It is for this reason that many of the improvements outlined below relate to the wider West Midlands area and beyond. The County Council strongly supports the Government’s ongoing investment in the Strategic Freight Network, which includes a number of routes through Staffordshire.

	Improvement	Importance to Staffordshire
Within Staffordshire	Norton Bridge Flyover and Stafford Area Improvements	The Norton Bridge Flyover (for completion by 2017) will provide capacity for additional services to run on the WCML by removing a major of conflict which currently exists. Other improvements include the raising of the speed limit on the slow lines (now 100mph) and upgrades to the signalling in the Stafford area and provision of a new loop for use by freight trains.
	Chase Line Upgrade	The upgrade of this route (for completion by December 2017), including electrification and line speed increases, provides another fully electrified route for freight between the Birmingham/Walsall area and the WCML, opening up new operating possibilities. Rugeley Power Station is located just off this route. The upgrade of this route is very important for Staffordshire.
	Electrification	A switch from diesel to electric traction for freight operation can bring about either accelerated services or the possibility for longer/heavier services, or a combination of these. The Birmingham to Derby Railway, passing through the east of the county, is likely to be electrified as part of the wider Cross Country electrification; a scheme we strongly support.
Regional/National	Water Orton Area Improvements	The strategically important railway in this area is heavily trafficked and there is a number of conflicting movements. HS2 may offer some relief, but even then, there would be a large number of trains in the area. Upgrade works were included in the Government’s High Level Output Strategy (HLOS) but have now not been included in the plans for the current Control Period (2014–2019). We continue to support this scheme and the need for it to be introduced as soon as possible, preferably in or prior to CP6 (2019–2024).
	Stourbridge to Lichfield	Centro has proposed the development of a West Midlands Strategic Freight Corridor from Stourbridge through to Lichfield, via Walsall, some of which is already used by freight trains. This would act as a new corridor for freight through the West Midlands and Staffordshire, offering capacity relief at a number of locations. We share Centro’s aspiration for developing the route in this way.
	Electric Spine	This project will see the route between the West Midlands and Southampton electrified. The benefit of this project to Staffordshire is that some freight services which currently pass along the WCML may be suitable to switch to electric haulage, providing clear environmental benefits but also greater capacity for the railway, allowing longer or faster trains to be operated. Electrification between Felixstowe and Nuneaton would provide similar opportunities for Staffordshire and the WCML in the county. We support wider electrification schemes such as these, allowing better use of available capacity.

**RFO3: Provide appropriate facilities for the handling of freight, ensuring freight can be unloaded and loaded at suitable locations in the county**

The largest generator of existing rail freight in Staffordshire is Rugeley Power Station, but its future is uncertain as current indications suggest that the Power Station will not be switching to biomass. The County Council’s priority is, therefore, to ensure that rail continues to be a preferred solution for the movement of freight to and from this facility, particularly as the bulk products necessary, such as coal, oil and gypsum, are especially suited to rail. It is also important to ensure that access charges do not compromise the economic case for rail freight at the site. In response to concern expressed by the Power Station regarding increasing difficulties in matching port and train paths to meet the desired train arrival profile at the site, it is important to ensure that capacity on the network is maintained.

The County Council supports the continued development and success of the Strategic Freight Interchanges in the West Midlands, including Hams Hall

(Warwickshire), Birch Coppice (Warwickshire), Telford International (Shropshire), Daventry (Northamptonshire) and Crewe Basford Hall (Cheshire). Another important site is Lawley Street, close to Birmingham City Centre.

A study commissioned by a number of local authorities has confirmed that there is a ‘mis-match’ in the West Midlands between supply and demand. The implications for the West Midlands will be

*“There is a mis-match in the West Midlands between supply and demand” (URS, 2012)*

an inability to attract investment and an inability to compete with other areas, including the East

Midlands and North West. For this reason, Staffordshire will need to support suitable developments as opportunities arise. The County Council are aware of and support in principle the following, subject to robust business cases being developed by promoters.

<p><b>Pentalver (Cannock)</b></p>	<p>Already a road-based logistics centre, this site is seeking a rail connection to the Chase Line and a GRIP2 study with Network Rail has been completed. We support the movement of goods to and from Cannock by rail and will work closely with Cannock Chase Council in enabling this facility to be developed.</p>
<p><b>Kilbride (Four Ashes)</b></p>	<p>This is a brand new site just off the railway between Wolverhampton and Stafford. The plans for this site are not as advanced as those for Cannock. A study by consultant URS suggests there could be considerable job creation associated with this new site. There is likely to be scope to reduce HGV movements on the M6 Motorway.</p>
<p><b>Moorland &amp; City Railway (Cauldon Lowe)</b></p>	<p>A possible new source of rail freight is that proposed by the Moorland &amp; City Railway. The first phase of the proposal is the reopening of the line from Cauldon Lowe to Stoke-on-Trent, to allow the transporting of cement and aggregates from Lafarge/Tarmac sites at Cauldon Lowe. We support this development in principle, provided the benefits can be proven in a business case. The railway also has aspirations for new passenger train services to destinations such as Leek.</p>
<p><b>Etwall (Derbyshire)</b></p>	<p>This is another new intermodal facility planned to be located close to Derby, adjacent to the Stoke-on-Trent to Derby Railway. Provided it does not adversely impact services operating into Staffordshire, we support this aspiration on the basis that it should remove HGV trips from the wider region’s highway network. Gauge clearance and re-signalling works are being undertaken on the North Staffordshire Line to enable more trains and larger freight wagons to be operated.</p>

**What are the timescales for action and collaboration?**

The actions have been categorised into the short, medium and long term. Some of the actions are ongoing and span all of these time periods.

Short Term: 2014-2019	Medium Term: 2020-2030	Long Term: Beyond 2030
Ensure that the chord is retained at Handsacre Junction and contained within the Hybrid Bill upon Royal Assent.	Continue to ensure that the emerging timetable for the classic network offers the considerable opportunities which rail freight deserves, including the necessary access to existing and potential terminal facilities.	As the high speed railway moves towards Phase 2, ensure that rail freight continues to be central to any discussion released capacity and its use on the classic network.
Work with the Industry Planning Group to ensure the best use of released capacity on the WCML post HS2 Phases 1 & 2.		
Support interventions already planned such as the Norton Bridge Flyover (completion 2017) and Chase Line Upgrade.	Lobby for improvements at Water Orton, which will have wider benefits for a number of routes in Staffordshire.	Continue to identify pinch points on the network which may inhibit the development of rail freight in the longer term.
Work with the industry as a whole to deliver the best outcomes for Staffordshire, ensuring that released capacity on the classic network can be used for rail freight.		
Support electrification of the wider rail network, including the Cross Country network which includes the network between Birmingham and Derby.		
Work with scheme promoters and freight operating companies to support credible opportunities for increasing flows of rail freight, particularly when there will be determinable reductions in highway goods movements as a result. The County Council will also work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to ensure that their rail freight aspirations can be achieved, for example the new site at Etwall, Derbyshire, and the numerous freight facilities in the West Midlands.		

## 7. Making It Happen

The County Council has limited influence over the delivery of rail improvements and, therefore, it will be necessary to continue to build relationships and work in partnership with the rail industry, local stakeholders, Network Rail, Government and other partners to deliver the objectives contained within this strategy.

Staffordshire County Council is already engaged in a number of key workstreams and projects. These include:

- Network Rail's Long Term Planning Process.
- Network Rail's West Coast Strategic Studies.
- The North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership.
- Funding service enhancements on the Chase Line.
- Delivering Kidsgrove Rail Station Interchange.
- Midlands Connect.
- Electrification and line speed enhancements on the Chase Line.
- Access for All at Lichfield Trent Valley Rail Station.
- Continuing to support local stakeholders affected by the HS2 project whilst maximising economic benefits.
- Preparing and submitting funding bids.

The County Council is also a member of both Rail North Ltd and West Midlands Rail who are each respectively working towards the devolution of rail services in the North of England and in the West Midlands. Further information regarding the individual devolution propositions is available from the following websites:

[www.railnorth.org](http://www.railnorth.org) and  
[www.westmidlands.com](http://www.westmidlands.com)

The County Council, therefore, whilst having limited resources to deliver rail improvements brings together this fragmented industry acting as the voice of Staffordshire, lobbying and influencing wherever possible and appropriate. The County Council is also committed to maximising any funding opportunities that become available to invest in rail improvements for Staffordshire.

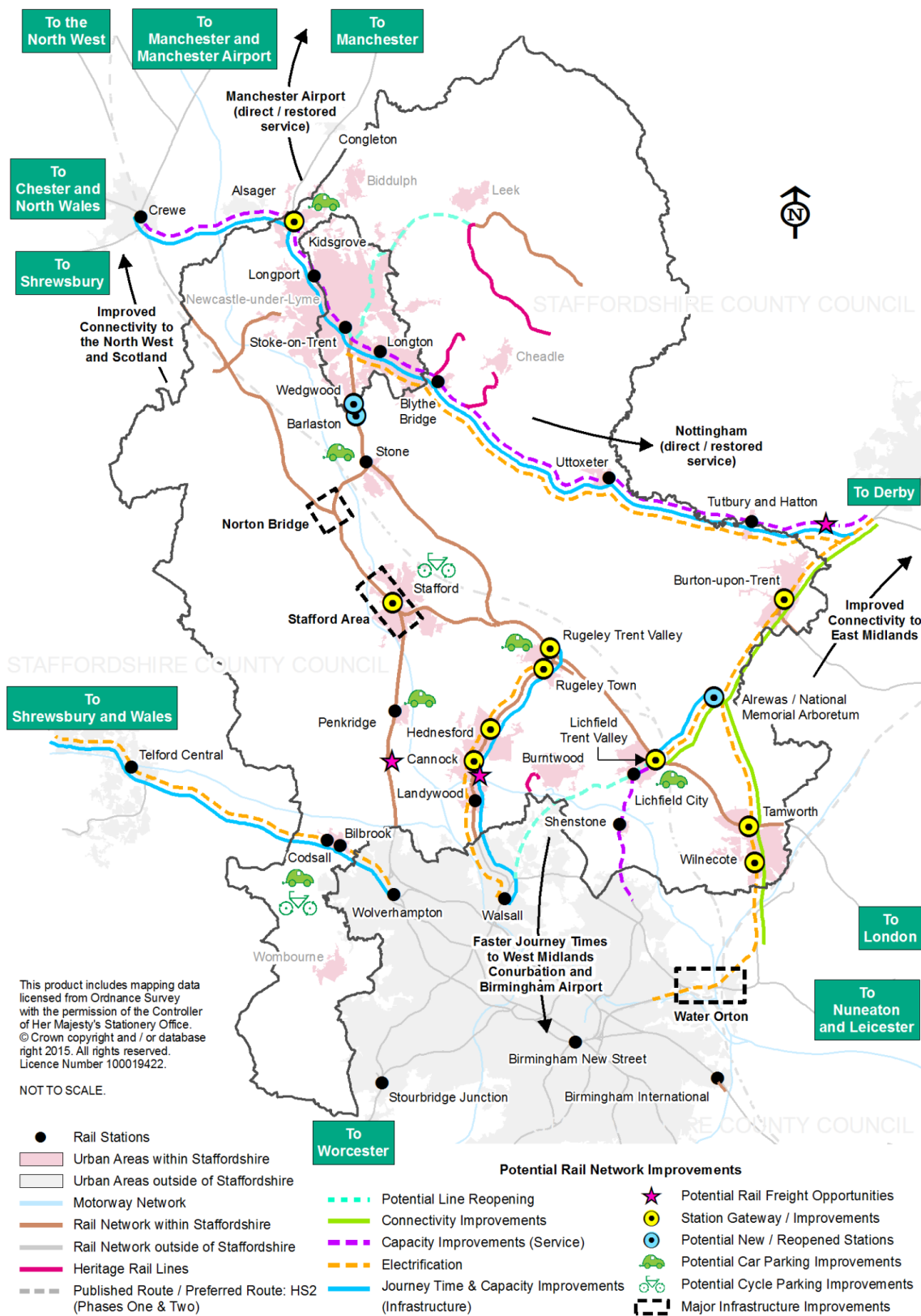
To be able to do this effectively it is essential for the County Council to be able to clearly articulate Staffordshire's priorities for investment which must be meaningful and deliver the objectives of this Strategy.

This Chapter, therefore, identifies priorities for rail investment under the following headings: infrastructure, passenger services, rail stations and rail freight (pages 33-38) whilst categorising them into short (2014-2019), medium (2020-2030) and long term (beyond 2030) priorities for delivery. This Chapter also identifies:

- why investment in a particular priority is required;
- how each priority will be delivered;
- the improvements that each priority will realise; and
- which of the objectives each priority achieves.

Figure 14 on the next page brings together all of these priorities for investment into an overarching diagram.

Figure 14: Priorities for Rail Investment in Staffordshire





INFRASTRUCTURE																																							
What are the opportunities and where could they be introduced?	What improvements will these bring and why are they required?	How will the improvements be delivered?	Which objectives do they work towards?	When can we expect delivery? (Short (2014-2019), Medium (2020-2030) or Long Term (Beyond 2030))																																			
<p>The County Council supports the electrification of a number of routes (allowing electric trains to be operated):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cross-Country network (including Birmingham to Derby Line)</li> <li>➤ Chase Line</li> <li>➤ Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury Line</li> <li>➤ North Staffordshire (Crewe to Derby) Line</li> <li>➤ Lichfield Trent Valley to Wychnor Junction</li> <li>➤ Electric Spine (electrifying between Southampton and Nuneaton / Milton Keynes) – to facilitate electrically hauled freight to and from the port</li> </ul>	<p>Electrification can facilitate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reduced journey times.</li> <li>➤ Increased reliability of rolling stock and journeys.</li> <li>➤ Reduced impacts on the environment.</li> <li>➤ Additional station stops to be added, supporting our aspirations for greater calls at some locations in the county.</li> </ul> <p>There are also a number of benefits for rail freight, including facilitating longer and faster (or a combination of the two) services to be operated.</p>	<p>The County Council will work with the rail industry through the long term planning process to ensure that these schemes are included in future business plans.</p> <p>The County Council will also work with partners and stakeholders for example through Midlands Connect to lobby relevant bodies and Central Government.</p>	<p>PR2 PR3 PR4 HS2-3 RF01 RF02</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cross-Country network</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chase Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>North Staffordshire Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lichfield Trent Valley to Wychnor Junction</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Electric Spine</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Cross-Country network		✓	✓	Chase Line	✓			Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury Line		✓		North Staffordshire Line		✓		Lichfield Trent Valley to Wychnor Junction		✓		Electric Spine	✓	✓	✓				
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<p>The County Council supports the increase of capacity/line speeds and re-signalling on a number of routes or at specific locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ North Staffordshire Line</li> <li>➤ Chase Line</li> <li>➤ Lichfield Trent Valley to Wychnor Junction</li> <li>➤ Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury Line</li> <li>➤ Stafford area – including the Norton Bridge Flyover currently being constructed</li> <li>➤ Water Orton area</li> </ul>	<p>The improvements can allow for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reduced journey times, giving rise to considerable economic benefits for the West Midlands area.</li> <li>➤ Increased frequencies of service (and additional flexibility in regard to stopping patterns).</li> <li>➤ Increased reliability of services, particularly where constraints or bottlenecks on the network are removed.</li> </ul>	<p>As above, the County Council will work with the industry to ensure these schemes are included in future business plans; lobbying with partners and stakeholders where appropriate.</p>	<p>PR1 PR2 PR3 HS2-2 HS2-3 RF01 RF02 RR03</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>North Staffordshire Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chase Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cross City Line (south of Lichfield)</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lichfield Trent Valley to Wychnor Junction</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stafford area (including Norton Bridge)</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water Orton area</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	North Staffordshire Line	✓			Chase Line	✓			Cross City Line (south of Lichfield)		✓		Lichfield Trent Valley to Wychnor Junction		✓		Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury Line		✓		Stafford area (including Norton Bridge)	✓			Water Orton area		✓	
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<p>The County Council will seek to maximise any potential opportunities associated with HS2, both from the high speed railway and also any released capacity on the classic network through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provision of a junction between HS2 and WCML at Handsacre Junction</li> <li>➤ Engineering works to support classic compatible running through Staffordshire</li> <li>➤ Infrastructure improvements to improve connectivity to both HS2 hub stations and HS2 classic compatible stations such as Stafford and potentially Stoke-on-Trent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The provision of a junction between HS2 and the WCML at Handsacre Junction will enable classic compatible services to be operated in Staffordshire – for example serving Stafford.</li> <li>➤ Other infrastructure improvements may be required to ensure that classic compatible services can be operated through Staffordshire. Such as removing potential conflicts with existing services patterns at locations such as Colwich Junction.</li> <li>➤ Infrastructure improvements may be required to provide good access from existing stations into either the stations served by classic compatible HS2 services or the HS2 hub stations.</li> </ul>	<p>The County Council will work with HS2 Ltd, along with the Industry Planning Group, Network Rail and Central Government to facilitate the best possible outcome for Staffordshire, both in terms of classic compatible HS2 services and improved service provision on the classic network.</p>	<p>HS2-1 HS2-2 HS2-3 HS2-4 PR1 PR2 PR3 PR5 RF01 RSG4</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term*</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Handsacre junction</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supporting infrastructure works</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*It is difficult at this stage to pinpoint exact timescales for the works associated with HS2 and hence they are all shown as covering the short, medium and long term</p>		Term*			Short	Medium	Long	Handsacre junction	✓	✓	✓	Supporting infrastructure works	✓	✓	✓																				
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<p>Provided that there are robust business cases, the County Council supports in principle the re-opening of the following routes to permit freight trains to operate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Moorland and City Railways route for freight between Cauldon Lowe and Stoke-on-Trent</li> <li>➤ Stourbridge to Walsall / Lichfield route for freight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Moorland and City Railways proposes to introduce freight services between quarries at Cauldon Lowe and the national railway network at Stoke-on-Trent. This would serve to reduce the strain on the highway network leading to considerable environmental benefits over road haulage.</li> <li>➤ The Stourbridge to Walsall / Lichfield route is a strategically important proposal to allow for increased freight capacity across the West Midlands. Specifically, the scheme is intrinsically linked with the provision of new passenger services on the Birmingham to Derby Line (see next table for details).</li> </ul>	<p>The County Council will support in principle Moorland and City Railways proposal to develop freight services provided the benefits can be proven in a robust business case.</p> <p>The County Council supports the development of the strategically important Stourbridge to Walsall / Lichfield route, given the considerable opportunities for stations in Staffordshire. The County Council will collaborate with neighbouring local authorities regarding this scheme.</p>	<p>PR1 RF01 RF02 RF03</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Moorland and City Railways (Freight)</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stourbridge to Walsall / Lichfield (Freight)</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Moorland and City Railways (Freight)	✓	✓		Stourbridge to Walsall / Lichfield (Freight)	✓	✓	✓																				
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<p>The County Council supports the introduction of large strategic schemes on the railway network which will bring considerable benefits to Staffordshire, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Northern Hub in Manchester</li> <li>➤ East-West Rail</li> <li>➤ Crossrail</li> </ul>	<p>The benefits to Staffordshire vary by scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Northern Hub – the scheme provides a step change in the level of capacity in the Manchester area and given the large number of journeys made from Staffordshire into Manchester, the scheme could offer significant benefits for the region.</li> <li>➤ East-West Rail – the new railway may offer faster journeys for both passengers and freight to and from the South of England, through avoiding the need to travel via the Birmingham area.</li> <li>➤ Crossrail – whilst this scheme is a considerable distance from Staffordshire, it may offer faster journeys into central London if Crossrail incorporates WCML suburban services in the future.</li> </ul>	<p>All three of these large schemes are already underway and hence are marked as short term in the delivery column. The County Council will support the delivery of these schemes and provide support for similar opportunities / changes of national importance in the future.</p>	<p>PR2 PR3 PR4 HS2-3 RF01 RF02</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Northern Hub</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>East-West Rail</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crossrail</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Short	Medium	Long	Northern Hub	✓			East-West Rail	✓			Crossrail	✓										
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<p>The County Council supports the introduction of electric train services on routes which are electrified. This is particularly topical given the considerable increase in the size of the electrified route network which is planned.</p> <p>A clear example would be the introduction of electric trains to operate on the Chase Line between Rugeley Trent Valley and the Birmingham area, upon completion of the Chase Line upgrade (which includes electrification and line speed increases).</p>	<p>There are many different benefits to running electric rolling stock over diesel rolling stock. The key benefits were outlined in the infrastructure table, but in general terms, electric rolling stock provides the opportunity for faster, more environmentally friendly journeys. The greater acceleration and deceleration of electric rolling stock can allow for more trains to be operated on a route, and can facilitate increased numbers of station calls.</p> <p>As more of the national railway network becomes electrified, the opportunities for using electric traction for longer journeys will increase significantly.</p>	<p>The County Council will work closely with the train operating companies to ensure that where possible, rolling stock is matched to the route it is being operated on. We do appreciate the complexity of this issue however and the large number of parties involved, particularly at a time when a large number of rolling stock cascades are occurring nationally.</p>	<p>PR1 PR2 PR3 PR4</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Chase Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other similar opportunities as they arise</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Short	Medium	Long	Chase Line	✓			Other similar opportunities as they arise	✓	✓	✓												
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<p>The County Council supports increased service frequencies at certain locations where more frequent services would give rise to considerable economic benefits. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The North Staffordshire Line</li> <li>➤ The provision of additional stops for long-distance services at Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent</li> <li>➤ Chase Line</li> <li>➤ Shrewsbury to Birmingham Line</li> <li>➤ Connections to Birmingham Airport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The North Staffordshire Line is currently served by hourly services only, but there are significant overcrowding issues at certain times of the day. We support any improvement of services on this route which could include the provision of 'semi-fast' services in addition to the hourly stopping services, plus provision of earlier and later trains.</li> <li>➤ Tamworth and Burton-upon-Trent are currently served by long-distances between Nottingham and Birmingham / Cardiff, but only by services every other hour to and from the North-East of England, which limits long-distance opportunities or necessitates a change of train at Derby. Note the opportunity below for new services to operate on the Birmingham to Derby Line.</li> <li>➤ The Chase Line is currently served hourly off-peak on Mondays to Fridays between Walsall and Rugeley Trent Valley, but services run half-hourly on a Saturday. We would support a half-hourly service operating off-peak at all times Monday to Saturday which would also offer improved connections from Stafford to stations on the Chase Line.</li> <li>➤ The Shrewsbury to Birmingham Line is currently served by an hourly fast service operated by Arriva Trains Wales and an hourly stopping service operated by London Midland calling at Codsall and Bilbrook (half-hourly in the peak period). We would support any improvements to service frequencies and calls at intermediate stations to improve connections to the West Midlands, Telford and Shropshire.</li> <li>➤ Staffordshire currently has only 1 train per hour direct to Birmingham Airport. We would support the introduction of other direct services from Staffordshire to Birmingham Airport.</li> </ul>	<p>All such changes to services will require close working between the County Council and the Train Operating Companies.</p>	<p>PR1 PR2 PR3 PR5 HS2-4</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>North Staffordshire Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tamworth / Burton additional stops</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chase Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shrewsbury to Birmingham Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Connections to Birmingham Airport</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Short	Medium	Long	North Staffordshire Line	✓	✓		Tamworth / Burton additional stops	✓	✓		Chase Line	✓	✓		Shrewsbury to Birmingham Line		✓		Connections to Birmingham Airport		✓	
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<p>The County Council supports the introduction of new service types where there are clear benefits to the area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Direct services to Manchester Airport</li> <li>➤ New suburban services on the Birmingham to Derby Line, serving Tamworth and possibly Burton-upon-Trent</li> <li>➤ New services linking Lichfield Trent Valley and Burton-upon-Trent</li> <li>➤ Direct services on the Chase Line to Stafford and beyond</li> <li>➤ Direct services from the North Staffordshire Line to Nottingham</li> <li>➤ Improved connectivity to the North West and Scotland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There are currently no direct trains between any railway station in Staffordshire and Manchester Airport. This could be achieved through the extension of services which currently terminate at Crewe, for example the London Midland service from London Euston or the East Midlands Trains service from Derby.</li> <li>➤ New services on the Birmingham to Derby Line, possibly serving new stations in North-East Birmingham (for example, Fort Dunlop), would enable more frequent journeys into the West Midlands Conurbation and greater connectivity within Staffordshire. If services continue beyond Birmingham (for example, to Worcester), then new 'through' journey opportunities may be created.</li> <li>➤ New links from Lichfield to Burton (and beyond) utilising an existing rail line would offer greater connectivity from Staffordshire to the East Midlands.</li> <li>➤ Extending services on the Chase Line from Rugeley through to Stafford and potentially beyond will offer improved connectivity for passengers along the Chase Line and restore a through link that was lost a few years ago. With the electrification of the Chase Line there could be options to extend services further north from Stafford offering new journey opportunities.</li> <li>➤ Providing through trains from the North Staffordshire line to Nottingham will offer greater connectivity from this line to the East Midlands and restore a link which was lost a number of years ago.</li> <li>➤ Other than Manchester and Liverpool, Staffordshire has poor connectivity to the rest of the North West and Scotland. We would like to see better connectivity to services north of Crewe to Warrington, Preston and Scotland.</li> </ul>	<p>As above, changes of this nature require close working between the County Council and the Train Operating Companies.</p>	<p>PR1 PR2 PR5</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Direct service to Manchester Airport</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Birmingham to Derby Line new services</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lichfield to Burton services</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chase Line service extensions</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>North Staffs Line Nottingham extension</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>North West Connectivity</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Direct service to Manchester Airport		✓	✓	Birmingham to Derby Line new services	✓			Lichfield to Burton services		✓	✓	Chase Line service extensions	✓	✓		North Staffs Line Nottingham extension		✓	✓	North West Connectivity		✓	✓
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<p>It is essential that potential opportunities associated with HS2, are maximised through ensuring that there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Classic compatible services serving Staffordshire stations</li> <li>➤ Robust and appropriate plans for use of freed up capacity on the classic network in Staffordshire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ With the provision of a junction between WCML and HS2 at Handsacre Junction (see infrastructure table), there is scope for classic compatible services to operate onto WCML routes through Staffordshire and serve Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent, for example, giving significantly reduced journey times to London.</li> <li>➤ There are many possible uses of freed up capacity on the classic network in the county, includes a variety of new service opportunities. On example would be new 'through' services on the Chase Line to Stafford and beyond.</li> </ul>	<p>The County Council will work with HS2 Ltd, along with the Industry Planning Group, Network Rail and Central Government to facilitate the best possible outcome for Staffordshire, both in terms of classic compatible HS2 services and improved services on the classic network to connect to HS2.</p>	<p>HS2-1 HS2-2 HS2-3 HS2-4</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Classic compatible services</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Best use of the classic network</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Classic compatible services	✓	✓	✓	Best use of the classic network	✓	✓	✓																
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<p>The County Council supports the introduction of additional units on some lines to help alleviate the problems of overcrowding at certain times, including the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ North Staffordshire Line</li> <li>➤ Cross-City Line</li> <li>➤ Birmingham to Shrewsbury Line</li> <li>➤ Chase Line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The majority of services on the North Staffordshire Line are currently operated using single carriage units. Overcrowding occurs regularly at both the Derby and Stoke-on-Trent ends of the route and will only get worse with more demand for travel to places such as the Sixth Form College in Stoke and Staffordshire University increases.</li> <li>➤ The Cross-City line is operated with a mixture of 3-car and 6-car units, demand for the service is such that more 6-car units are required to cope with the levels of demand.</li> <li>➤ The Birmingham to Shrewsbury Line is operated by the mixture of 2-car, 3-car and at peak times 4-car units. There is overcrowding at peak times on these services, partly as some of these services also call at local stations between Birmingham and Wolverhampton. Longer trains are required although platform lengths could be an issue at some stations.</li> <li>➤ The Chase Line services are operated by a mixture of train lengths but these services are regularly overcrowded at peak times, consistent train lengths are required for these services which will be delivered through electrification.</li> </ul>	<p>As above, changes of this nature require close working between the County Council and the Train Operating Companies.</p>	<p>PR4</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>North Staffordshire Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cross-City Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Birmingham to Shrewsbury Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chase Line</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	North Staffordshire Line		✓		Cross-City Line		✓		Birmingham to Shrewsbury Line		✓		Chase Line	✓										
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## RAIL STATIONS

What are the opportunities and where could they be introduced?

What improvements will these bring and why are they required?

How will the improvements be delivered?

Which objectives do they work towards?

When can we expect delivery?  
(Short (2014-2019), Medium (2020-2030) or Long Term (Beyond 2030))

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<p>The County Council supports investment and improvements to rail stations within Staffordshire and those stations located outside of Staffordshire that will bring wider benefits to the county for example through Access for All and National Station Improvement Programme. Such Stations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Kidsgrove</li> <li>➤ Lichfield Trent Valley</li> <li>➤ Lichfield City</li> <li>➤ Stafford</li> <li>➤ Stone</li> <li>➤ Cannock</li> <li>➤ Hednesford</li> <li>➤ Penkridge</li> <li>➤ Rugeley Trent Valley</li> <li>➤ Rugeley Town</li> <li>➤ Penkridge</li> <li>➤ Codsall</li> <li>➤ Burton-upon-Trent</li> <li>➤ Tamworth</li> <li>➤ Wilnecote</li> </ul>	<p>Station improvements can enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increased car-parking can encourage car users to use rail for their main journey especially where there is limited car-parking or capacity issues. This reduces congestion on the road network and enhances the environment for other users.</li> <li>➤ Increased station capacity where necessary will accommodate future growth in rail demand.</li> <li>➤ A station being made fully accessible enables all passengers regardless of their mobility levels to use the rail network to travel. This increases the connectivity opportunities available to an individual.</li> <li>➤ New station buildings or refurbishment ensures that outdated facilities are made fit for purpose for today's passengers thereby making a positive contribution to a passengers' journey experience and bringing economic, social and environmental benefits.</li> <li>➤ Increased attractiveness of public transport through the provision of high quality interchange opportunities and network integration.</li> <li>➤ Maximise the opportunity to reduce car usage to access the rail network by improving station facilities and access for pedestrians and cyclists for example through DfT's HS2 National Cycleway Feasibility Study.</li> <li>➤ Improving general station quality, passenger waiting facilities, safety and security together with the provision of consistent and high quality passenger information provides a positive contribution to a passengers' journey experience.</li> <li>➤ Provision of additional rail network capacity for example through longer platforms, allows longer trains to serve stations to accommodate current demand and predicted future growth in rail usage.</li> </ul>	<p>The County Council will work with the rail industry through the long term planning process to ensure that Staffordshire's gateway schemes are included in future business plans.</p> <p>The County Council will work in partnership with Network Rail, Station Facility Operators and stakeholders to identify improvements and take advantage of relevant national and local funding opportunities.</p> <p>The County Council will work with partners to identify innovative and alternative solutions to deliver improvements to Staffordshire's rail stations for example through community rail partnerships, future re-franchising and rail devolution.</p>	<p>RSG1 RSG2 RSG3 RSG5 RSG6</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Kidsgrove Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lichfield Trent Valley Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lichfield City Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stafford Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stone Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cannock Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hednesford Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Penkridge Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rugeley Trent Valley Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rugeley Town Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Codsall Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burton-upon-Trent Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tamworth Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wilnecote Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Kidsgrove Rail Station	✓			Lichfield Trent Valley Rail Station	✓	✓		Lichfield City Rail Station	✓	✓		Stafford Rail Station		✓	✓	Stone Rail Station		✓	✓	Cannock Rail Station	✓	✓		Hednesford Rail Station	✓	✓		Penkridge Rail Station		✓		Rugeley Trent Valley Rail Station	✓	✓	✓	Rugeley Town Rail Station	✓	✓		Codsall Rail Station	✓	✓		Burton-upon-Trent Rail Station	✓	✓		Tamworth Rail Station	✓	✓		Wilnecote Rail Station		✓	
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<p>The County Council will continue to support the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership (CRP) and will support where appropriate the expansion of such partnerships for example at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bilbrook Station</li> <li>➤ Codsall Station</li> <li>➤ Stations along the Chase Line</li> <li>➤ Stone</li> <li>➤ Burton upon Trent</li> <li>➤ Penkridge</li> </ul> <p>This list is not exhaustive and there are other stations within Staffordshire where this may also be appropriate.</p>	<p>Community Rail Partnerships are demonstrated to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An improved and more attractive station environment.</li> <li>➤ A safer and more secure station.</li> <li>➤ A more attractive station.</li> <li>➤ Increased numbers of passengers using the station.</li> <li>➤ Increased station investment.</li> <li>➤ Local promotion of the train services for work, education and leisure.</li> <li>➤ Increased local community involvement (including businesses and schools) and ownership of a station.</li> <li>➤ Innovative projects to improve the route for passengers.</li> <li>➤ Increased volunteer support and station 'adoption' from the local community.</li> <li>➤ The development of station improvement projects to improve the travel experience.</li> </ul>	<p>The County Council will continue to work in partnership and support the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership.</p> <p>The County Council will work with partners, the rail industry and local communities where there is support for the development of community rail partnerships and station 'adoption'.</p> <p>The County Council will work with partners through future re-franchising processes and rail devolution to take forward the concept of community rail partnerships and station 'adoption' where appropriate.</p>	<p>RSG1 RSG2 RSG3 RSG5</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>North Staffordshire CRP</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bilbrook Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Codsall Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stations along Chase Line</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stone Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burton-upon-Trent Rail Station</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Penkridge Rail Station</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	North Staffordshire CRP	✓	✓	✓	Bilbrook Rail Station		✓	✓	Codsall Rail Station		✓	✓	Stations along Chase Line		✓	✓	Stone Rail Station		✓	✓	Burton-upon-Trent Rail Station	✓	✓	✓	Penkridge Rail Station		✓	✓																												
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<p>The County Council will support the re-opening or development of new rail stations where there is a robust business case. For example at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Barlaston and/or Wedgwood</li> <li>➤ Alrewas/National Memorial Arboretum</li> </ul> <p>The opportunity to deliver new stations is closely aligned to other rail opportunities and wider policy areas such as local development plans.</p>	<p>Providing opportunities for better connectivity to the rail network, located where people need them are a fundamental factor in the success of the rail network and essential for maximising connectivity between areas of housing, employment and leisure.</p>	<p>The County Council will work with the rail industry through the long term planning process to ensure that Staffordshire's aspirations are included in future business plans</p> <p>The County Council will work with partners, the rail industry and Network Rail to identify opportunities that enable existing stations not currently served by rail services to be served in the future.</p> <p>The County Council will continue to work in partnership with Local Planning Authorities to ensure that the development of new stations is considered as part of an areas local plan process.</p>	<p>RSG4 RSG5 RSG3 RSG2 RSG1</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Barlaston and/or Wedgwood</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alrewas/National Memorial Arboretum</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term				Short	Medium	Long	Barlaston and/or Wedgwood	✓	✓		Alrewas/National Memorial Arboretum		✓	✓
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RAIL FREIGHT SERVICES																											
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<p>The County Council recognises the importance of 'through' rail freight flows in the County and, therefore, supports schemes which maintain or increase the level of capacity, such as the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stafford Area improvements</li> <li>➤ Electric Spine</li> <li>➤ Water Orton area improvements</li> <li>➤ Strategic Freight Network</li> </ul>	<p>Rail freight is more environmentally friendly than moving goods by road. Per tonne conveyed, rail freight produces 76% less carbon dioxide than road freight. The County Council strongly supports a shift from road to rail freight to reduce the level of impact on Staffordshire's highway network.</p> <p>The Stafford Area improvement scheme will facilitate an extra path each hour on the WCML for freight services, in part by the removal of a point of conflict at Norton Bridge Junction.</p> <p>The Electric Spine provides a newly electrified route between the Southampton area and the WCML, providing new opportunities for freight trains to be electrically hauled.</p> <p>The Water Orton area is a considerable bottleneck in both passenger and freight terms, and the constraints here may impede the potential of rail freight facilities such as Hams Hall and Birch Coppice.</p>	<p>The County Council will work with the rail industry through the long term planning process to ensure that these schemes are included in future business plans</p> <p>The County Council will also work with partners and stakeholders, including through Midlands Connect to lobby and influence relevant bodies.</p>	RF02	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Stafford Area improvements</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Electric Spine</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water Orton area</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Strategic Freight Network</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Stafford Area improvements	✓			Electric Spine	✓	✓	✓	Water Orton area		✓		Strategic Freight Network	✓	✓	✓
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<p>The County Council supports the development of new rail freight terminals in Staffordshire. The authority is aware of proposals / aspirations for the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pentalver (intermodal)</li> <li>➤ Four Ashes (intermodal)</li> <li>➤ Moorland and City Railways (quarry at Cauldon Lowe)</li> </ul>	<p>A study commissioned by a number of local authorities in the West Midlands showed that there is a 'mis-match' between supply and demand in the West Midlands regarding intermodal capacity. This underlines the need to support the development of new facilities and initiatives which will remove freight vehicles from the highway network (whilst appreciating that there may be local increases in traffic).</p> <p>The County Council supports Moorland and City Railways proposal in principle, subject to a robust business case demonstrating clear benefits.</p>	<p>The County Council will work with scheme promoters and Freight Operating Companies to support credible opportunities for increasing flows of rail freight.</p> <p>The County Council will also work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to ensure that their rail freight aspirations can be achieved, provided that there are no detrimental impacts on the level of service which could be provided in Staffordshire.</p>	RF03	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Pentalver</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Four Ashes</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moorland and City Railway</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Further details on the timescales associated with these developments were provided earlier in the rail strategy</p>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Pentalver	✓	✓		Four Ashes	✓	✓		Moorland and City Railway	✓	✓					
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<p>HS2 provides an opportunity for rail freight.</p> <p>The exact nature of the phasing of the project will have an impact. The optimum outcome according to the rail freight industry would be for Phase 1 to extend as far north as Crewe (but with a junction maintained at Handsacre to enable classic compatible high speed services to run).</p> <p>Regardless of the phasing, it is important that the County Council seeks to maximise the opportunity associated with released capacity on the classic network.</p>	<p>With the removal of fast services to HS2, there should be a huge benefit to freight services, in providing new capacity on the classic network. This could apply to a number of routes on the classic network, including the WCML (the western arm of the Y-network will run broadly parallel to this) and the Birmingham to Derby Line (running broadly parallel with the M42 and A38 corridors).</p> <p>Dialogue with the Rail Freight Group suggests that if Phase 1 were to extend only as far north as Handsacre Junction, then the intervening period between Phase 1 and the full Y-shaped network may cause problems for freight. Therefore, the best outcome for the rail freight industry would be for Phase 1 to be extended to Crewe.</p>	<p>The County Council will work with HS2 Ltd, along with the Industry Planning Group, Network Rail and Central Government to facilitate the best possible outcome for Staffordshire. However, there may be difficulties during the intervening period between Phase One and Two if Phase One extends only as far as Handsacre Junction.</p>	RF01	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="3">Term</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Short</th> <th>Medium</th> <th>Long</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Handsacre Junction</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Classic network</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Term			Short	Medium	Long	Handsacre Junction	✓	✓	✓	Classic network	✓	✓	✓								
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## Contact us

If you have queries or comments on the Staffordshire Rail Strategy, Please contact:

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If you would like this document in another language or format (e.g. large text), please contact us on 0300 111 8000 or email [transport.planning@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:transport.planning@staffordshire.gov.uk)

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