

Summary

City of York Council have had aspirations to re-open local rail stations for approximately eleven years and these aspirations were included in the City's Local Transport Plan 2001-2006.

The original North East York Rail Scheme comprised of a pre-qualification bid to the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) for Rail Passenger Partnership (RPP) funding to build new rail stations at Strensall, Haxby and York District Hospital. In addition to this, the scheme also required revenue support to operate an independent shuttle service.

Despite approval of the pre-qualification bid by the SRA, requirements from Network Rail to upgrade key infrastructure to provide additional capacity en-route meant that scheme capital costs increased almost three-fold, from approximately £1.85 million to £4.5 million. These increased capital costs meant that it was not possible to demonstrate a robust business case for the scheme in its (then) current form.

Following advice from the Strategic Rail Authority, City of York Council Members approved revising the North East York Rail scheme into two phases. Under the revised scheme a Haxby only option would be progressed in the short-term utilising the existing Trans Pennine service between Scarborough, York, Leeds and the North West which eliminated the need for expensive infrastructure upgrades and ongoing revenue support for an shuttle train. In the longer term, City of York Council has aspirations for new stations at Strensall and York District Hospital.

History

- A bid to the (then) Department for Environment Transport and the Regions (now Department for Transport) for construction of Haxby and Strensall rail halts, within the North East York Rail scheme (NEYRS), was included in the 1999 Transport Policies and Programme (TPP). However, the bid was unsuccessful, so City of York Council was directed to the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) for Rail Passenger Partnership (RPP) funding.
- A Pre-Qualification Bid for RPP funding was submitted to the SRA in October 1999 and was, subsequently, approved.
- A Draft Formal Bid submission was made to the SRA in July 2001. Amendments to the bid, including a reduction in service frequency to an hourly service, were later requested by the SRA. Outstanding information from Railtrack (now Network Rail) on track access charges was also required to allow the 'Final Bid' to be submitted.
- Railtrack approved scheme timetable subject to agreement to upgrade route infrastructure – Scarborough Bridge / Bootham Level Crossing. Infrastructure upgrade too costly to be supported by scheme.
- City of York Council appoint Laing Rail to undertake review of infrastructure costs

ANNEX A

- In January 2003, the SRA announced that funding for un-contractualised RPP schemes was to be suspended. As the Council's bid was not contractualised it was deemed that other funding options needed to be sought.
- In March 2003, following political / officer pressure, the SRA announced that it would reconsider RPP funding for NEYRS on the basis of a Haxby only option. The council was further advised by the SRA to wait until operator for new TPE franchise is announced, before progressing the bid.
- First is announced as the new operator for TransPennine Express Franchise, in September 2003. Steer Davies Gleave is appointed by the Council to revise the bid following a positive meeting with First.
- EMAP on 3rd September 2003 resolved to pursue NEYRS in two phases:
 - Phase I - bid for construction of Haxby station utilising existing Trans Pennine Express services
 - Phase II - bid for construction of Strensall station and provision of revenue support to operate new shuttle service. There would also be the potential to include York District Hospital Station within this bid, should an economic and social case be made.
- In December 2003 a RPP Bid Information Paper is sent to the SRA for consideration. The commercial case for the scheme also under consideration.
- The decision at EMAP 3rd December (in relation to consideration of Haxby Rail Station Update II) is to: *"Note current progress in developing schemes"*
- In January 2004, The SRA advised City of York Council to examine the commercial feasibility of scheme. Consequently discussions begin with Laing Rail / First regarding commercial viability of scheme that same month.
- In March 2004, Laing Rail is appointed by City of York Council to undertake a review of the scheme. The scheme review included station design, an engineering review and timetable performance modeling work.
- In April 2005, Laing Rail established its commercial case for part-funding Haxby station at Station Road. Also, in April 2005, Local members ask officers to consider relocating Haxby station to a new location outside the town with integrated bus link. Further work investigating this is to be undertaken.
- In December 2005, an Exceptional Scheme bid to the DfT for Haxby station was included in the City's Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006-2011. DfT later advised City of York Council that its final decision on this will be taken following full 'scheme sign-off' by Network
- The Decision at EMAP on 11th September 2006 (in relation to consideration of Haxby Rail Station Update III) is to: *"Note current progress in developing schemes"*

ANNEX A

- Since September 2006, up to the present time, CYC Officers have been and are continuing to liaise with Network Rail and First Transpennine Express to confirm, or otherwise, the viability of trains calling at Haxby. Work is currently ongoing to reassess the business case in order to expedite the Department for Transport's decision on the Exceptional Scheme Bid. It is anticipated that a further progress report will be submitted to EMAP later this year.
- A report to EMAP on 14th July 2008 will consider the 'Leeds City Region Tram-Train Feasibility Study. The main points of this are, in relation to services between York and Harrogate:
 - Replacement of existing heavy rail vehicles with tram-train vehicles on a like-for-like timetable;
 - Enhanced frequency of operation between Knaresborough and York;
 - Implementation of a rail-based park & Ride on the A59 at Poppleton would need to be closely coordinated with any bus-based scheme;
 - Links into York Northwest (York Central and British Sugar) would need to cross rail lines;
 - A city-centre loop would require on-street running on a route that is somewhat remote from the city centre attractions;
 - A Park & Rail service for the potentially relocated Askham Bar Park & Ride will need to be compatible with the operation of East Coast Main line and York-Leeds services. In addition track layout for the station would be affected by any extension to Copmanthorpe;
 - A station at Copmanthorpe may be attractive to walk-on passengers in the area, but would not be suitable for Park & Rail services due to the access and environmental disbenefits to local residents, and
 - Providing a connection at York station for stations north of York without adversely affecting links into York Central or other inter-city traffic would be difficult.
 - Low levels of demand together with operational and Infrastructure constraints too significant to justify any further investment in Haxby to Strensall services.

Current Situation

The table below details a summary of progress on the scheme to date.

Work Undertaken	Haxby Station	<i>Organisation Responsible for Completion of Works</i>
Public consultation	✓	CYC
Identification of preferred site	✓	CYC
Member agreement to preferred site	✓	CYC
Transport Impact Assessment	✓	CYC
Environment Impact Assessment	✓	CYC
Outline design and costing	✓	CYC
Development of scheme business case	✓	CYC
Development of timetable compliant with Network Rail Rules of the Plan	✓	CYC
Support of First for intermediate stop at Haxby *	✓	First
Support of SRA for intermediate stop at Haxby *	✓	SRA
3 rd Party Funding interest	✓	Laing Rail
Submission of 'Exceptional Scheme Bid' to department for Transport (decision awaited)	✓	CYC
Liaise with Network Rail (as Joint Funding agency for the scheme) to confirm viability of Haxby station	X (ongoing)	CYC / Network Rail
Detailed design (modular station)	X	Network Rail

✓ = Work Completed

X = Work to be undertaken

* - Subject to resolution of train performance issues and re-evaluation of business case