

# Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy Consultation Report



Autumn 2017



# Contents

1.	Background	5
2.	The Consultation Process	7
3.	Summary	9
4.	Recommendations	10
5.	Methodology	11
6.	Results	13
7	Media	189

# List of Appendices

Appendix A	Consultation Plan	190
Appendix B	Longer Written Responses	198

# 1. Background

**1.1** In 2016 Worcestershire County Council commissioned SLC Rail to develop a Rail Investment Strategy for Worcestershire (WRIS) that can be used to inform the development of the 4th Local Transport Plan (2017 – 2030).

The Strategy is split into five key stages, designed to baseline the current rail situation in the County, assess the scale of growth expected, identify gaps and solutions, model the economic benefits of these solutions and prioritise the investment to achieve maximum value for money.

**1.2** Investing in the rail network of the County is important in order to achieve sustained economic growth, increased connectivity and reduced reliance on motor vehicles. The outputs of this WRIS can be used to lobby the rail industry for prioritised improvements up to 2043. A summary of the Strategy's findings is found below.

- **Stage 1** – Baseline: Worcestershire is crossed by two nationally important rail lines – the North Cotswold line from London Paddington to Worcester and Hereford and the Bristol to Birmingham Line. Local services operate to Birmingham along the Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch routes. The County's stations are used by over 9.2m passengers per year (2015/16) and Network Rail is projecting this to grow by 97% by 2043 (against a 2013 baseline). However, direct connectivity from Worcestershire is currently poor. Cross Country services between South-West England, Birmingham and the North-West and North-East pass through but do not call in Worcestershire, and the County's network suffers from various constraints such as manual signalling and single line tracks which have a direct impact on train service timetables.
- **Stage 2** – Change in Worcestershire: The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) produced by the Worcestershire LEP (WLEP) sets out ambitious growth targets for the County. By 2025 the SEP proposes the creation of 25,000 new jobs, construction of 45,000 new dwellings and an increase in GVA (Gross Value Added) from £9bn to

£11.8bn per annum. This growth is focused around the rail corridors in the three areas of Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove & Redditch and South Worcestershire. Further housing development is expected to 'overspill' from the Greater Birmingham housing allocations and, although numbers are still to be quantified, it is thought around 37,900 new houses will need to be shared between the nine adjacent local authorities (including Worcestershire) by 2031. Key policy documents for the region (e.g. the SEP, WCC's LTP3 and the West Midlands LTP) all cite the benefits of prioritising rail travel as a means to achieve sustainable growth.

- **Stage 3** – Rail Industry Planning: The rail industry is currently engaged in its 'Long Term Planning Process' which looks to shape a vision for the National Rail network to 2043. In parallel Network Rail (NR) is working to define its specific investment proposals for 'Control Period 6' (2019 – 2024) and various rail franchises are being renewed. If the recommended outputs from this WRIS are to be realised their development will need to align with these industry processes. There also exists the opportunity to capitalise on benefits from HS2 over the same period. Finally, this Long Term Planning Process presents the opportunity for the County to lobby for, and secure, key infrastructure improvements during the industry's Control Period 6 2019-2024 and beyond that remove the existing bottlenecks such as the manual signalling and single line sections of railway.
- **Stage 4** – Connectivity: Economic tests combining the findings of stages 1 – 3 of the WRIS led to the identification of 10 new train service options enhancing Worcestershire's connectivity with other UK economies. These were modelled by consultants SYSTRA using a bespoke economic model consistent with that used by Network Rail in its 2013 Markets Studies. This model produces a forecast of both GVA increase and jobs creation resulting from improvements

to generalised journey time and the enhanced business to business activity generated by the new services.

- **Stage 5** – Conditional Outputs: The new service options are termed ‘Conditional Outputs’, as used by the rail industry in its Long Term Planning Process (LTPP). The Conditional Outputs which would deliver the greatest uplifts in GVA and new jobs for the County are enhanced rail connectivity are:
  - Between Worcestershire And London and The Thames Valley – along the North Cotswold Line with a 2 trains per hour and faster service;
  - Between Wyre Forest/Kidderminster and London Paddington – extending Paddington-Worcester services to Droitwich Spa and Kidderminster;
  - To South-West, North-West and North-East England – with calls at Worcestershire Parkway in Bristol-Manchester and Plymouth-Newcastle services;
  - Between Worcestershire and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol – with a regional service via Kidderminster-Worcester Shrub Hill and/or Bromsgrove-Worcestershire and Worcestershire Parkway.

**1.3** The combined benefits of the ‘Conditional Outputs’, if fully realised, would generate total of £50.42m new GVA per annum for Worcestershire and create 1,151 new jobs.

**1.4** The Conditional Outputs also cover key aspirational schemes essential to facilitate this new connectivity, including:

- North Cotswold Line Capacity Upgrade – Doubling of part or all of the Norton Junction-Evesham and Charlbury-Wolvercote Junction sections (as now championed by the North Cotswold Line Task Force);

- Worcester Area And Droitwich Spa To Stoke Works Capacity Upgrade – Providing additional capacity for services passing through Shrub Hill and Foregate Street and doubling of the Droitwich-Stoke Works single line (together with re-signalling);
- New Car Park Capacity and/or new Stations – Addressing the structural shortfall of current car parking capacity and providing capacity for up to 100% passenger growth by 2043, either at existing or new stations;
- Worcester Shrub Hill Station Regeneration – enabling Shrub Hill to support both current train services and new services proposed in this Rail Investment Strategy and lead to a step change in economic regeneration of the Shrub Hill Opportunity Zone and the areas to the east of the City Centre;
- Electrification – Of both the Bristol to Birmingham and Snow Hill Lines.
- Ticketing And Fares – A further Conditional Output also suggests revision of the County’s highly complex ticketing and fares structure to reflect both existing train services and those proposed in the Strategy.

**1.5** The sections within this report can be broken down as follows:

- Section 2 sets out the consultation process;
- Section 3 summarises the outcomes of the exercise;
- Section 4 contains the recommendations of this report;
- Section 5 covers the Methodology;
- Section 6 details the results of the exercise;
- Finally, Appendices are included, which provide background information on the planning process for the exercise (Appendix A) and the longer written responses (Appendix B).

## 2. The Consultation Process

**2.1** Worcestershire County Council has a duty to consult as part of its Best Value Duty pursuant to the Local Government Act 1999 and would therefore consider it appropriate to consult on its Local Transport Plan. The Act States:

‘A best value authority must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. For the purpose of deciding how to fulfil the duty an authority must consult:

- Representatives of persons liable to pay any tax, precept or levy to or in respect of the authority;
- Representatives of persons liable to pay non-domestic rates in respect of any area within which the authority carries out functions;
- Representatives of persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and
- Representatives of persons appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions.’

**2.2** The Transport Act 2000 also places a duty on local transport authorities, when formulating policies and plans, to consult key stakeholders.

**2.3** A further duty to involve, introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, requires local authorities and passenger transport authorities to involve citizens in local decision making and service provision.

**2.4** Worcestershire County Council has considered these and other duties in determining the detail of how to develop and consult on the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy, thus ensuring that local representatives have been given genuine opportunities to influence its contents.



- 2.5** The consultation process for the draft Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy took place over an 8-week period until 11th August, 2017. It sought to embrace a number of methods to obtain feedback on the proposals from the public and stakeholders. The governance applied during this consultation exercise included:
- That the consultation take place prior to any final adoption of the proposal;
  - That regular result updates were provided throughout the consultation period to the Project Team to enable on-going consideration;
  - That timelines were adhered to;
  - That there had been a robust stakeholder engagement;
  - That the appropriate face to face consultation had taken place, particularly with the rail industry;
  - That senior officers had made an extensive time commitment to the consultation;
  - Ensuring that good organisation and record keeping was undertaken;
  - That the consultation process allowed for “self-correction” as issues emerged through its duration;
  - That a good information system was put in place, including a website;
  - Ensuring that any significant adverse impacts were considered and actions drawn up as appropriate.

- 2.6** The key outcomes from the consultation process include:
- Gathering comments from a variety of sources, along with other streams of information to determine how the WRIS can be modified and improved;
  - To evaluate and respond to this information so that the Strategic Transport Team and SLC partners may take decisions on any WRIS amendments.
- 2.7** The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of feedback to participants and to facilitate any amendments to the WRIS accordingly in preparation for Cabinet adoption in October 2017.



# 3. Summary

- 3.1** The consultation process received responses from a number of different methods. A high level summary of the outcomes can be seen in the following paragraphs.

## **Presentations**

- 3.2** Presentations were made to Worcestershire County Councillors and the Worcestershire Rail User Group Alliance. These are outlined further in this document. All attendees were encouraged to participate and any responses are detailed in further sections.

## **The Questionnaire (quantitative)**

- 3.3** The short questionnaire was developed to support both quantitative (direct answers to questions) and qualitative (free text) responses. It was available on the website and in hard copy format. A total of 121 questionnaires were received.

## **The Questionnaire (qualitative)**

- 3.4** 83% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed to the WRIS. Positive statements from the qualitative (free text) comments from the questionnaire included:
- Excellent strategy – just what Worcestershire needs to attract investment;
  - I think it's a great idea and long overdue;
  - A bold Strategy, hope that as many outcomes as possible succeed
  - Improved rail links to London and in the Bristol direction would be beneficial to my work;

- I would strongly endorse this Rail Investment Strategy – especially in relation to the proposed improvements to the connections south of the county;
- Absolutely the right thing to do for the county;
- It would be a fantastic opportunity for local small and medium businesses to expand.

- 3.5** Only 10% of respondents stated that they 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the strategy and reasons included:

- Enhancements required at Wythall Station;
- West of Worcester/Hereford needs to be included;
- Redditch to Worcester needs to be included;
- Negative impact on other stations e.g. Shrub Hill and Pershore and services;
- Lack of support for the re-opening of the Stratford to Honeybourne Line;

- 3.6** Wherever possible, these issues were addressed and /or explanations included in the re-draft following the consultation exercise.

## **Written responses**

In total, 43 responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders and eight written responses were received from members of the public. The written submissions were received by either mail or email. The headline themes were wide and varied and generally reflected those that also arose from the questionnaire.

# 4. Recommendations

**4.1** In light of the outcomes, this report on the consultation exercise for the proposed Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy recommends that:

- The report is used to inform the Project Team and decision makers at Worcestershire County Council regarding WRIS development and the subsequent draft submitted to Worcestershire County Council Cabinet for adoption (due October 2017);
- That all information underpinning this report, including all responses is closely examined by the Project Team. This should help determine the amendments to the WRIS;
- All the information contained in this report is shared with the participants of the exercise by publishing a report on Worcestershire County Council website [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp4](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp4)
- That the report is signed off by the Project Team as an accurate summary of the process;
- That all participants are informed of the general responses to comments received and the subsequent decisions taken to update the WRIS document via the Worcestershire County Council website (see above for link).

# 5. Methodology

## Introduction

- 5.1** Various consultation methods were employed to ensure that the consultation process was as inclusive as possible whilst retaining significance to the consultee. This included a mix of both qualitative (written responses and free text comments) and quantitative (ranking questions) in order to encourage contributions.
- 5.2** The Consultation Plan for the proposals is provided in Appendix A.
- 5.3** The geographical area targeted for the consultation process was the County of Worcestershire. However, cross boundary issues were taken into account in terms of access into and out of the county and neighbouring Highways Authorities, statutory and industry bodies were consulted.
- 5.4** A range of consultation materials was developed to support the implementation of the consultation methods including:
- A draft consultation document;
  - Letters and emails inviting participation;
  - Promotional posters;
  - Website with an online survey.

## Survey

- 5.5** Stakeholders, residents and interested parties were invited to complete the WRIS survey and send their comments and feedback to help to shape its final contents. Respondents were asked to:
- State who they were responding on behalf of;
  - Decide to what extent they supported the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy;
  - Offer any comments on the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy;
  - Outline any other issues that they thought ought to be covered in the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy.
- 5.6** The survey was open to all respondents from 5th July, 2017 until 11th August, 2017. The results of those respondents who chose to complete the survey can be seen in Section 6.

## Emails and Letters

- 5.7** Respondents were also able to respond to the consultation directly via e-mails and letters. The results of those respondents who chose to write emails or letters can also be viewed in Section 6.

## Website

**5.8** The consultation process had its own bespoke pages on Worcestershire County Council's website, containing a self-completion on-line survey, giving an opportunity to respond via a series of questions and free text comments. [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp4](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp4)

**5.9** The WRIS web page went live 5th July, 2017.

## Media

**5.10** A number of press releases were issued in July 2017 until the end of the Consultation to generate of media interest and it was also promoted on LinkedIn

## Non-Respondents

**5.11** It is acknowledged that despite best efforts to promote the consultation and encourage both service users and non-users to engage with the consultation, there will still have been a proportion of people who were not aware of the consultation exercise. Such people may not:

- Be able to listen to, read or watch local media;
- Have encountered or attended one of the face-to-face opportunities,
- Have access to a computer to visit the website,
- Have heard from their Local Member/Parish, or
- Have heard by word of mouth.

**5.12** Other than the cost-prohibitive measure of delivering to individual households, the Project Team felt that the array of measures employed to ensure awareness of the consultation exercise was appropriate.

# 6. Results

## Survey: Introduction

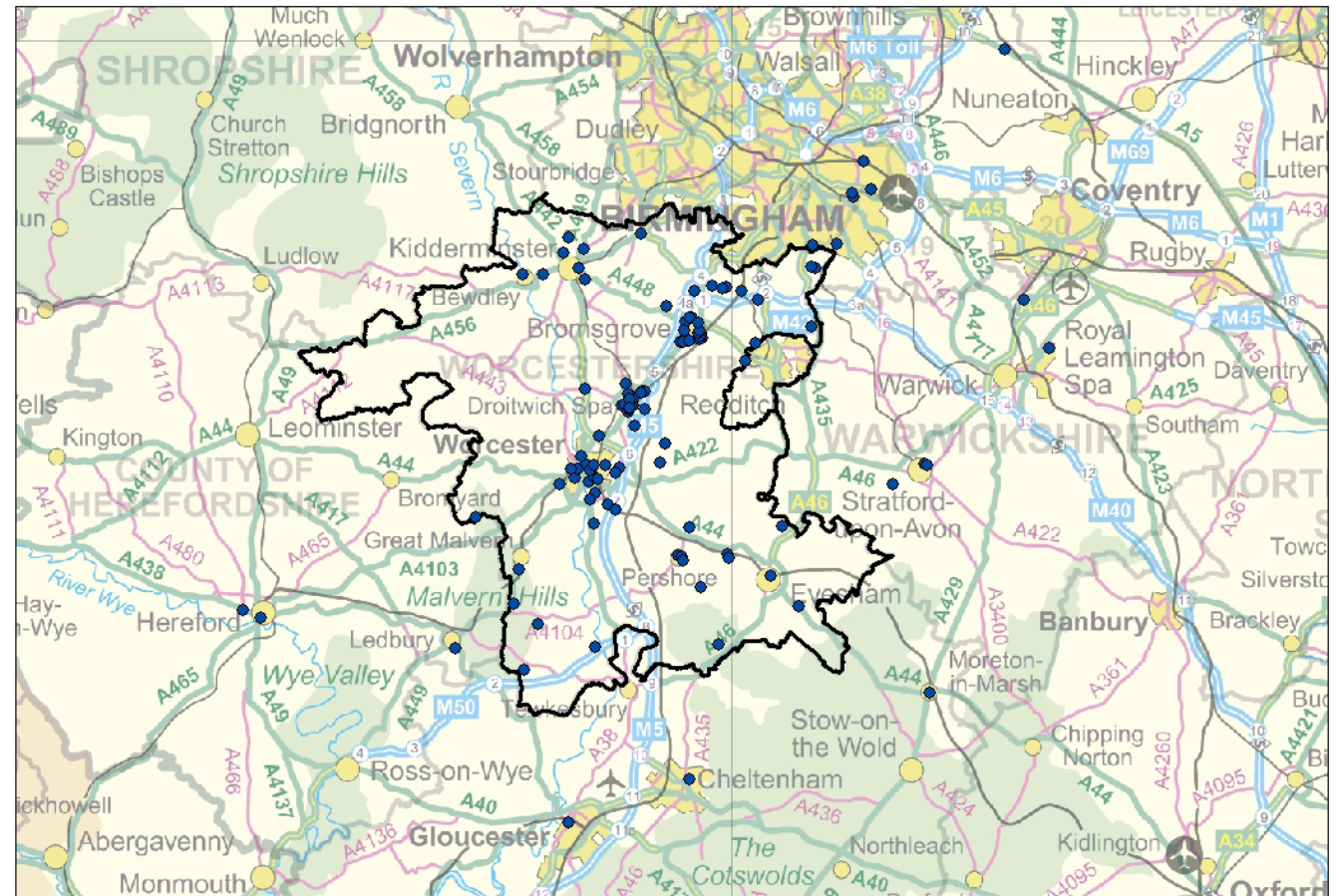
- 6.1** 121 responses were received to the WRIS Survey. Questions focussed on respondent' location, respondent type, and their views of the WRIS.
- 6.2** Please note whilst reading these results that:
- The sample of respondents achieved is entirely self-selected;
  - None of the results have been weighted in any way to reflect the population of Worcestershire; and,
  - Throughout the report where percentages (%) are shown they may not add to 100% due to the impact of rounding.

## Survey Results

### Respondent Locations

- 6.3** Respondents were invited to share their location. This was not a compulsory question and not all respondents chose to identify their location, Figure 6.1 shows the geographical spread.

Figure 6.1: Map Showing The Locations Of Respondents



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**Respondents to the Worcestershire Rail Infrastructure Strategy Consultation**

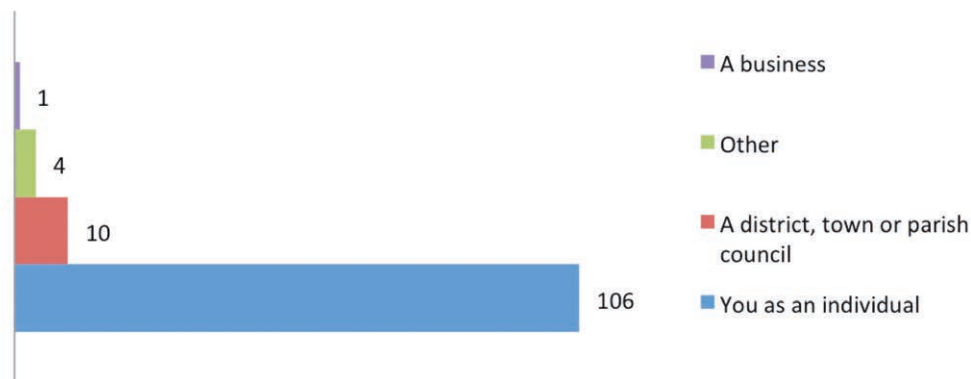
Produced by Market Management and Research (September 2017)

**worcestershire**  
county council

## Respondent Type

**6.4** Information was collected from respondents concerning who the respondent was commenting on behalf of. This was not a compulsory question and respondents chose whether to share this information or not. Figure 6.2 shows that overall (88%), respondents were typically expressing their views as individuals and not on behalf of an organisation.

**Figure 6.2: Who Are Respondents Commenting On Behalf Of?**



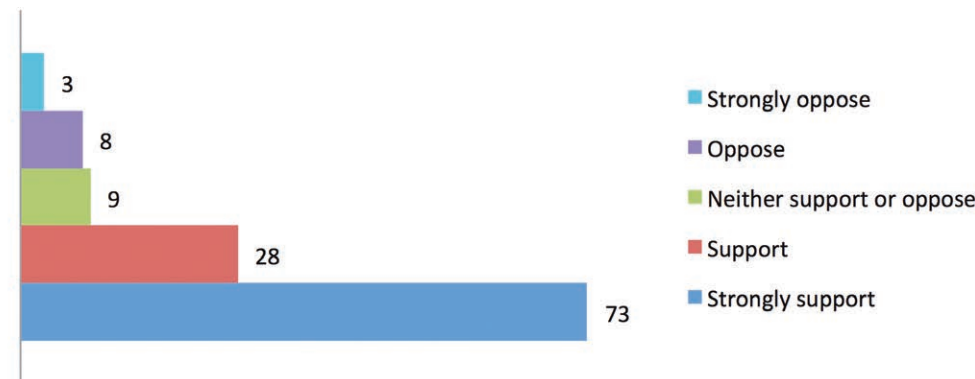
## Respondent Views

**6.5** Respondents were asked to identify their level of agreement with each aspect using a five point scale;

- Strongly agree;
- Agree;
- Neither agree or disagree;
- Disagree; or
- Strongly disagree

**6.6** Consistent with other parts of the survey, this was not a compulsory question and respondents chose whether to share their views with us or not. Figure 6.3 shows that the WRIS was supported (strongly agree or agreed) by 83% of respondents. Conversely, only 10% stated that they 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the overall strategy. The remaining 7% of respondents chose not to express a strong opinion for or against by selecting 'neither agree or disagree'.

**Figure 6.3: To What Extent Did Respondents Agree Or Disagree With The WRIS?**



**6.7** Respondents that chose to 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the overall strategy were asked to explain why, and these comments along with WCC Officer responses are shown in Table 6.1 below.



**Table 6.1: Comments To Explain Why Respondee Chose To ‘Disagree’ Or ‘Strongly Disagree’ With The WRIS**

Disagree or Strongly Disagree	WCC Response
<p>I have selected Strongly oppose due to 2 key reasons 1) The suggested cuts at Kidderminster station and lack of focus for a faster service. Cutting Kidderminster’s train service from 4 trains per hour to 3 is unacceptable given the high use of the station and the catchment area. Four off peak trains must be retained (with more during peak hours) and these need to be sped up. It is not clear which stations would be missed out after the Rowley Regis turnback is built. Langley Green is already skipped by most trains. Galton Bridge is key for interchange. The Hawthorns is key for the Metro to Wolves and West Brom football. Jewellery Quarter is now a destination for commuters. It would be better for more stopping trains from Stourbridge, enabling Kidderminster trains to run fast Stourbridge to Smethwick. One of Cradley Heath or Rowley Regis could be skipped if the signalling permitted. 2) Focus on Worcestershire Parkway Instead of campaigning to get more services to stop at Worcestershire Parkway, it would be better to improve the service running from Worcester to Cheltenham to at least hourly (with regular Kidderminster services extended to Cheltenham / Gloucester). This would enable same platform interchange at Cheltenham for Kidderminster passengers travelling to the South West. Worcester Parkway will just encourage more traffic on the congested Worcester South Bypass and promote urban sprawl.</p>	<p>The WRIS does not advocate any cuts to services at Kidderminster. We will continue to work with West Midlands Rail to support services calling at stations within the wider Birmingham area that are most beneficial to Worcestershire residents.</p> <p>Conditional Outputs WAB1 / WAB 2 promote new services between Worcester – Cheltenham Spa – Gloucester – Bristol with WAB1 providing the option to extend north to Kidderminster.</p> <p>We note your comments regarding traffic congestion on the Worcester South Bypass and can provide reassurance that traffic modelling has shown there will be minimal impact from the new station.</p>
<p>Focus on Worcs Parkway does NOTHING for Worcs west of the Severn. It will remain quicker and very much cheaper from Malvern and Worcester city area to travel to Birmingham New Street and use the very frequent service to Euston. For Droitwich and Kidderminster, extension of the Marylebone services frequency would be far better. Indeed, extending these to Malvern would promote much needed competition and more journey opportunities to the wider West Midlands. Car users are unlikely to favour Parkway over the M5 corridor, especially if fees are charged for car parking. A much better alternative would be a park (for free) and ride station at Rushwick, capable of diverting traffic off the Worcs city bypass and in close proximity to planned future housing developments. This should take top priority over all other proposals.</p>	<p>We are conscious of the need for improved access to rail services for residents living to the west of Worcester and are actively investigating options to enhance rail access in this area (including the potential for a new station).</p>



Disagree or Strongly Disagree	WCC Response
<p>No mention at all of Wythall Station in the Investment Strategy document. Wythall is a major population growth area in the county and Wythall station needs to be developed as a major computer hub for travel by the local residents to Birmingham (not to Bromsgrove or Worcester)</p>	<p>We recognise the importance that Wythall station has in providing access for local residents to Birmingham. We reference the station on pages 15,16,29,40 &amp; 54 of the WRIS. The challenge at Wythall is that the station is land-locked and the provision of car parking or other enhanced facilities is therefore very restricted. We instead support options that would further enhance the nearby Whitlocks End station, which has more land availability, and the potential for development as a major commuter hub.</p>
<p>Trains from Worcestershire to London should surely start from Bromsgrove as it would serve a much greater area than Kidderminster. Bromsgrove is closely allied to Redditch and Rubery, Halesowen and part of the Black Country. A stronger service to Cheltenham and Gloucester would also be very welcome</p>	<p>We are not considering BGV-LON as an extension of the proposed Worcester – London services. Kidderminster Station provides access to national rail services for a large number of Worcestershire residents and is the primary rail access point for passengers from across Wyre Forest District. The important role that Kidderminster plays for Worcestershire’s economy (including through income generated by the Severn Valley Railway and Safari Park tourist destinations) should not be underestimated. The Bromsgrove catchment area for London services will benefit from direct highway access to Worcestershire Parkway; our ambition for south-facing services from Bromsgrove would offer London services via connection at Worcestershire Parkway.</p>
<p>The document appears to significantly down-play the future role of Shrub Hill without consideration of what the growth figures would be if additional car parking were provided using land which is currently un-developed. The intention would seem to be an intentional running-down of the station, yet it remains to be seen how the population east of Shrub Hill (including the large development on the former Ronkswood Hospital site, existing Warndon Villages estates and planned developments alongside the M5) would be served by reducing their option to a signal station in the city that would have no car park. If Worcester is to have a parkway station it must also have a station that can be accessed easily by car, foot or cycle that can be used by residents in the east of the city. The suggestion that Blakedown is a suitable ‘overspill’ compared to Hartlebury overlooks the requirement for most of the potential users to drive through Kidderminster to reach that station. Hartlebury has the advantage of being able to act as the railhead for Stourport and is adjacent to a business park which can be accessed directly off the A449 and could be used to provide the requisite parking capability.</p>	<p>It is not our intention to down-play the future role of Shrub Hill Station. On the contrary we are actively developing an ambitious Masterplan for Shrub Hill which will include measures to greatly enhance accessibility to, and within, the station. In addition, our intention will be for the enhanced Worcester – London train services (described in Conditional Output NCL1) to call at Shrub Hill. The two interventions taken together will help transform the station into a high quality transport interchange.</p> <p>We have considered options to enhance capacity at Kidderminster station, however the significant levels of peak period congestion in the town means that access is effectively ‘capped’ and expansion at alternative stations (such as Blakedown) needs to be considered. In the short-term, Blakedown is considered more favourable than Hartlebury because it has a much better level of train service.</p>

Disagree or Strongly Disagree	WCC Response
<p>I want to see a regular rail service between Bromsgrove and Cheltenham to enable us to access southbound trains to Exeter, and not have to go into Worcester or Worcester Parkway for this.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. We will continue to lobby key stakeholders with regards to this matter.</p>
<p>I oppose one particular aspect of the strategy, namely the reluctance to support reopening of the line between Honeybourne and Stratford-upon-Avon, particularly because the County Council has hitherto been supportive. I appreciate that the entire length of line which would have to be rebuilt lies within Warwickshire, but reinstatement of the line would also benefit Worcestershire, firstly by proving another route to London via Oxford and secondly by relieving the inevitable stress on roads arising from the provision of thousands of new homes on the Warwickshire/Worcestershire border.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>
<p>Complete lack of inclusion of connectivity between Worcester and Hereford as indicated in the Midlands Connect Strategy for providing an integrated and comprehensive transport system for the West Midlands. Complete lack of understanding of the importance of London trains running through to Hereford via. The plan effectively closes the London rail service boundary at Worcester and does not consider the route to Hereford as an integral part of the Cotswold line.</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of services west of Worcester to Great Malvern &amp; Hereford. By way of re-assurance, Herefordshire County Council are members of the recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) which has a remit to improve services between Hereford – Worcester – Oxford and London. We will amend the final version of the WRIS to include suitable references to both the importance of the route and the work of the NCLTF.</p>

Disagree or Strongly Disagree	WCC Response
<p>Why do you wish some of the London trains to be switched to Kidderminster (of all places). YOU should be advocating that they carry on as they do at present to HEREFORD. Why is HEREFORD omitted from your plan ? Yes – I know it is not in Worcestershire.</p>	<p>The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans.</p> <p>We will expand the final version of the WRIS to make more overt reference to train services and stations west of Worcester including Great Malvern &amp; Hereford.</p>
<p>Disappointed that the Stratford to Honeybourne reinstatement has been excluded. The report makes a number of references to the difficulties of reaching HS2 via M5 / M42, and of reaching Birmingham from the Evesham area. These points seem to have been forgotten in the final analysis which thus appears to be inconsistent.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Disagree or Strongly Disagree	WCC Response
<p>I would like to see the rail connection reopened between Stratford and Honeybourne which would make a circular route via Evesham to Worcester and Birmingham. The reinstatement would also allow a far superior and alternative link with Oxford and London via Moreton-in-Marsh. These could be used for employment opportunities and for business, social and leisure travel, especially with all the extra housing developments taking place in the Stratford-upon-Avon area which are currently experiencing potential road gridlocks that will only become worse. The Cities of Worcester and Oxford having a faster and better rail connection with Stratford would boost tourism in a beneficial way to all three of these very special destinations.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

**6.8** Respondents were asked if they had any general comments on the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy. These are summarised in Table 6.2 below together with WCC Officer responses.

**Table 6.2: General Comments On The WRIS**

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
Excellent strategy – just what Worcestershire needs to attract investment.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
“Making it happen” 2 pages out of 92 that dont really say how WCC will make things happen. Just hopeful comments about lobbying. Very little substantial information on IEP roll out on North Cotswold Line or indeed when 2tph is expected to be delivered.	One of the biggest challenges in delivering new schemes within the rail industry is securing support from the DfT, NR and the Train Operators before they can be delivered. Lobbying from an evidence based position is one of the strongest ways in which Worcestershire can achieve the objectives of the WRIS. We have provided limited information on the IEP scheme because there is still a lack of widely available information regarding the final specification and service pattern on the North Cotswold Line.
Waste of my money	Your comment is noted, however, Worcestershire County strongly believes that this strategy delivers the evidence to support much needed investment in rail for the county.
I think it's a great idea and long overdue.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
A lift at Shub Hill Railway Station is a must My wife could not manage the stairs, and to use the barrow crossing is a very long walk. to see passengers struggling to carry heavy cases over, is an everyday sight.	Despite this being on Network Rail's delivery plan for some time, unfortunately it has not yet been progressed. Worcestershire County Council will include it as part of the Shrub Hill Station Masterplan and strongly lobby the rail industry accordingly.
Given that rail links from Birmingham NS are excellent. It would seem more sensible and better value for money to introduce fast trains from key stations, ie Kidderminster, Hagley to Birmingham New Steet	The economic evaluation work undertaken as part of the development of the WRIS has shown that further service enhancements between key stations such as Kidderminster and Hagley to Birmingham New Street are not as economically beneficial to Worcestershire's economy as those Conditional Outputs prioritised for investment.
A bold Strategy, hope that as many outcomes as possible succeed.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>Cutting Kidderminster's train service from 4 trains per hour to 3 is unacceptable given the high use of the station and the catchment area. Four off peak trains must be retained (with more during peak hours) and these need to be sped up. It is not clear which stations would be missed out after the Rowley Regis turnback is built. Langley Green is already skipped by most trains. Galton Bridge is key for interchange. The Hawthorns is key for the Metro to Wolves and West Brom football. Jewellery Quarter is now a destination for commuters. It would be better for more stopping trains from Stourbridge, enabling Kidderminster trains to run fast Stourbridge to Smethwick. One of Cradley Heath or Rowley Regis could be skipped if the signalling permitted. Instead of campaigning to get more services to stop at Worcestershire Parkway, it would be better to improve the service running from Worcester to Cheltenham to at least hourly (with regular Kidderminster services extended to Cheltenham / Gloucester). This would enable same platform interchange at Cheltenham for Kidderminster passengers travelling to the South West. Worcester Parkway will just encourage more traffic on the congested Worcester South Bypass and promote urban sprawl.</p>	<p>The WRIS does not advocate the cutting back of train services such as the Kidderminster example cited. One of the key objectives of Worcestershire Parkway is to provide residents with direct access to important Cross-County services to the north and south-west, along with the Thames Valley &amp; London.</p> <p>In addition, one of the prioritised Conditional Outputs within the WRIS is for much needed train service improvements between Kidderminster – Worcester – Cheltenham Spa – Gloucester – Bristol (Condition Output WAB1 – details of which can be found on page 83 of the WRIS) and which will open up access to the south-west.</p>
<p>YES!! It's not just the frequency that will attract much more travellers.. it's the time from Worcester Parkway to London that will decide on the success. I commute regularly from Warwick Parkway as the journey can be as short as 1hr and 10min. Psychologically a sub 90 minute journey is a winner!! (not sub 2 hours as touted earlier). Even if you only have 1 train to begin with leaving at 7am and arriving at 8:15 you will attract many commuters from other locations. I even commute sometimes from Birmingham International.. anything to avoid the painfully slow omnibus from Worcester that currently exists</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>I work for Visit Worcestershire however these are my personal comments, The Black Country have their horses along the rail line as something to look at while travelling and it was always a recognition that I was nearly home when travelling from my dad's in North Wales to Walsall. There were conversations over 8 years ago to have a Black Pear Tree (the size of the Angel of the North) somewhere along the motorway near the Worcester Parkway site and it would be good to have some ambition around this to create a better identity for the county with rail users and also could be a good identifier from the Motorway for people heading to use the station. The identity of the county and highlighting it to travellers who pass us or who have never heard of us has been an issue for a long time but including something like this would be a great step forward. The improvements between Worcester and Plymouth will improve visitor travel into the county as more Americans come to find their family heritage connections in the county. The Winslow Family have many descendants that will want to visit the Mayflower Museum in Plymouth and then the Cathedral where he studied and lived for 5 years. The important thing is always cost, it is more expensive to travel to Plymouth by train than it is by car and there is currently a change at Bristol or Cheltenham Spa which puts me off travelling.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments we will keep this on our agenda in order to promote Worcestershire as an attractive place to reside, work and visit.</p>
<p>The document does not seem to mention the time between these new commitments of example 2 trains per hour between Worcester and London will run, it would be very beneficial to have late night services such that it is possible to access evening entertainment such as West End shows which finish around 22:00 and be able to return the same evening, the only current solution is to drive to Birmingham International.</p>	<p>Noted. Unfortunately we cannot give a timescale for delivery but please be reassured that this is our number one priority for rail improvements for Worcestershire and we will work hard with key stakeholders to deliver our ambitions as quickly as possible.</p>
<p>I think that dualing (and I assume electrifying) the Droitwich to Stoke Branch line is an excellent idea.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Unfortunately, recent announcements by the Secretary of State for Transport have put future electrification schemes in doubt.</p>
<p>The proposed new Kidderminster to Paddington train would be very beneficial to me as I regularly travel from Worcester to Pangbourne via Oxford. If I could get a train straight through from Kidderminster to Oxford without having to change in Worcester it would be brilliant so I strongly support the proposed new trains to Paddington</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>



Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>Improved rail links to London and in the Bristol direction would be beneficial to my work.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>
<p>I would strongly endorse this Rail Investment Strategy – especially in relation to the proposed improvements to the connections south of the county. At the moment it is actually easier to travel directly into New Street from the south west rather than attempting to change trains at both Cheltenham and Worcester Shrub Hill when returning to Kidderminster. In fact, it would be beneficial if cross country trains (well, at least, one an hour) could call at the developing Worcester Parkway station, or even better divert to call at Shrub Hill. This should only add a few additional minutes to the overall journey from the south west to Manchester/the north east/Scotland. Of course, direct (and reasonably frequent) express services from Kidderminster/Droitwich to Bristol Temple Meads would serve a similar purpose. These services would also provide a connection to services into South Wales from Bristol Parkway. An alternative route to London from the Stourbridge line would also be of significant benefit to the county – although absolutely not at the expense of the Chiltern services into Marylebone. Having, earlier in the year, had cause to travel from Worcester to Reading for the first time in many years I was staggered to note that the northern and southern ends of the Cotswold were still single track. On my return journey we had to wait on the mainline north from Oxford for nearly 20 minutes for a southbound train to clear the single track section – with the possible knock-on impact on northbound cross country services from the south coast. Whatever else maybe the effect of this proposed Strategy there is needed to ensure that these single train sections are dual tracked – as well as the need to (significantly) reduce the Worcester to Oxford journey time. This is another reason why people such as myself drive to Birmingham International and to a lesser extent to Warwick Parkway when travelling to London.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>Lacking in imagination. No attempt to break Cotswold line TOC monopoly. Insufficient thought given to needs of Worcestershire west of the Severn. No apparent evaluation of whole journey times/ costs compared to those obtainable via Birmingham, especially for access to London.</p>	<p>Franchise arrangements on the Cotswold Line are established by the Department for Transport and we are not seeking to address matters of TOC competition within the WRIS. We acknowledge that there is a strong demand for rail travel in Worcestershire west of the Severn and we will expand on these requirements within the final version of the WRIS. We address existing connectivity issues for Worcestershire from page 21 of the WRIS onwards, with acknowledgement of the issues travelling via Birmingham when more direct connections could be provided.</p>
<p>Pershore services must be improved and NOT reduced to support Parkway.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Pershore services will not be reduced as a result of Worcestershire Parkway station being delivered. A Parkway station for Worcestershire strengthens the case for a greater frequency of service and improved journey times on the North Cotswold Line.</p>
<p>The document is long, verbose and gives the impression of being repetitive. It could be much better organised using some appendices and presenting the strategy more clearly in the main part of the document whilst relegating other possibilities to separate sections. The strategy itself is long on “blue-sky objectives” and short on “practical propositions”.</p>	<p>The practical propositions of the WRIS are summarised in two pages in Chapter 8 of the WRIS. The biggest challenge associated with delivering new rail schemes is to secure industry support for the proposals, hence the emphasis on lobbying DfT, NR and the Train Operators – backed up with an evidence based strategy.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>It is worthy but unachievable in the current climate where electrification is unlikely to be extended and enhancements being repeatedly deferred – the Control Period 6 Statement of Funds Available will have little for enhancements. It should instead concentrate on maximising what is possible. Failure to do so will mean it loses credibility. Two trains per hour Worcester to Paddington requires the North Cotswold Line capacity upgrade and would require more bi-mode stock. More achievable is all existing Oxford trains to London using IEPs instead of the London/local trains mix. Also, extending London-Cheltenham to Worcester gives the 2nd train per hour and opens other travel opportunities. One train per hour Kidderminster/Droitwich Spa/Worcester/Paddington – journeys from Kidder would take longer than existing routes, would require more bi-mode stock and redrawing franchises. Additional Kidderminster/Droitwich Spa/Worcester regional services for connections at Worcester would be more achievable. Additional calls at Worcestershire Parkway for Bristol/ Manchester and Plymouth/Newcastle services – connections at Worcestershire Parkway for Worcester would make or break this. I haven't seen any strategy for Parkway – FS and SH may lose services to Parkway with no connections to Worcester so the city actually loses out. Regional service between Kidderminster and Bromsgrove, Worcester and Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester and Bristol – agreed. Worcester FS, SH or Parkway? SH in my opinion. Worcester-Bristol demands an hourly or more service Worcester Shrub Hill station regeneration only as part of a wider regeneration of the SH area, otherwise it is 'polishing a turd'.</p>	<p>Following the Secretary of State's announcement in July 2017 regarding the future of electrification schemes in the UK we will need to reflect on the related content and strategy within the final version of the WRIS to ensure it remains up-to-date with the latest industry thinking. The recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force will consider a variety of options to enhance services between Worcestershire and London, with an emphasis on achieving value for money, maximising the benefits across stations in the region and making the best use of rolling stock availability. Worcestershire Parkway has no detrimental effect on services from Foregate Street or Shrub Hill. We very much agree that Shrub Hill Station regeneration needs to go hand-in-hand with regeneration of the Shrub Hill area as a whole, with both supporting each other.</p>
<p>There is quite a lot hanging on the improvements to the Cotswold Line. I couldn't see reference to the Camp Hill Chords in Birmingham, which would have the potential of improving links between Worcestershire (and also the SW and S Wales) and HS2 (and the Chiltern Line) via Moor Street/Curzon Street, either for connection to the North or alternative connections to London. Also there was no exploration of the possibility of routing at least some Birmingham – Cardiff trains via the Worcester – Hereford line and the possible economic impact.</p>	<p>The Camp Hill Chords are an enhancement being promoted by stakeholders in the West Midlands and we will work with them to understand and maximise the benefits of this infrastructure enhancement for Worcestershire.</p> <p>Routing Birmingham – Cardiff trains via the Worcester – Hereford route was considered and ruled out on the basis of unfavourable journey times and low economic benefits.</p>
<p>How long would the train take to London? What are the likely costs?</p>	<p>It is Worcestershire County Council's ambition to reduce journey times between Worcester City and London. It is too early to indicate costs at this stage but this will be considered and assessed by the newly-formed North Cotswold Line Task Force of local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
A link to London would make a huge difference	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
Short sighted in design of Worcester parkway with single platform on Evesham line and no platform for an extension of Birmingham snow hill services from shrub hill to new station	The development of the North Cotswold Line, including Worcestershire Parkway is an incremental process. The station has been designed with passive provision for a second platform, which may be forthcoming in due course as part of a further phase of investment.
1. If the system is to be efficient there must be sufficient passenger capacity so that seats are available. 2. Rail travel when efficient is environmentally friendly and encourages less road travel.	Noted and agreed.
Excellent idea to reduce car usage and therefore pollution. Positive link for communities. Business opportunities and therefore jobs brought to the area. Visitors to Droitwich could result in the town centre improving.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
Absolutely the right thing to do for the county. The residents should be fully supportive of increasing transport links, reducing vehicular traffic in exchange for quick links to larger cities, improving access for people to work/shop and enjoy entertainment.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
It would be a fantastic opportunity for local small and medium businesses to expand and would generate investment opportunities from further afield.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
I certainly support more trains to London, especially from Worcester and Droitwich. Faster trains required too. If I'm in a hurry I find that I drive to the airport for the Virgin Train. My husband is in London at least once per week and has to be in Worcester around 06:30 to allow him contingency to get to 10:00 meetings.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
Travel via Birmingham New Street to Euston with only one change quicker and fewer changes than journey to Paddington.	Noted and agreed. Worcestershire County Council's number one priority is to invest in greater frequency and reduced journey times on the North Cotswold Line

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>1) As a regular commuter from Droitwich Spa for many years, a key constraint on passenger growth from this station is the restricted level of car-parking available (leading to neighbouring roads being utilised causing nuisance to residents) and safety concerns at peak times when parents come to pick up schoolchildren who utilise the rail service to access surrounding schools. The decisions around Strategic development of additional car-parking need to be brought forward from this plan, making the most of the existing opportunity to utilise the space created by the closure of the Baxenden Chemical works to acquire additional land around the station to facilitate car-park provision. Car-park charging levels also need to be considered as these currently contribute to the choices of most commuters to utilise the local road network for parking rather than existing Network Rail car-parks. 2) The proposals to enhance connectivity to London direct from Worcester/Kidderminster and Droitwich Spa are to be particularly welcomed. There are a high proportion of my fellow commuters who would benefit from this proposal. An additional consideration to improve connectivity which may be more immediately achievable however, would be the minor alteration to train timings on the Worcester/Bromsgrove/Birmingham service to allow connection to the Virgin trains Euston services. For example, currently the arrival at Birmingham of the early morning LM Worcester services is around 2 minutes prior to the departure of the VT services. Increasing that gap to 5 minutes would reduce the commuters overall journey time and also prevent a significant number of passengers attempting to traverse Birmingham New Street at sub-sonic speeds</p>	<p>As indicated in the WRIS, there is a significant shortfall in car parking requirements at stations in Worcestershire. It is therefore, one of our key priorities to review car parking provision and explore additional capacity opportunities wherever possible. Droitwich Station falls into this category.</p> <p>We hope that the new Bromsgrove timetable that is to be introduced in 2018 will improve connections with services such as the London Euston train at Birmingham New Street. We will also feed such considerations into our ongoing lobbying of the industry and work with West Midlands Rail on their own Rail Investment Strategy.</p>
<p>It is great to hear the many positive things that are finally happening for Worcester.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>
<p>Good as far as it goes- would like to see more stations (new or reopened) to try to provide an alternative to road travel (Fernhill heath, St Johns, maybe a station for Blackpole/Warndon?)</p>	<p>Noted, however, with limited funding available, the County Council must seek to prioritise rail schemes on the benefits they deliver to the County. Additional stations will be investigated on a case by case basis to ensure that they are prioritised according to the strength of their business case/deliverability.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>No mention of improvements to Droitwich Spa Station. The increase in services at Droitwich Spa would be welcome indeed but cannot go ahead without improved access. With a small Pay &amp; Display car park which is a distant and difficult walk to the ticket office, already there are parking problems in the residential roads around the station. Bus links are a joke. The first 19A does not pass the station until 08.47 and the last one leaves at 16.47. The 18 does not pass until 09.27 but does leave at 17.44. Neither of these services are of use to those wishing to use the station for work. At least the 20 does a bit better with a first service at 07.20 and a last one at 18.20. The 133 passes 3 times a day on 3 days of the week! The 355 passes 3 times a day. Of course there are no “through” tickets nor a PLUSBUS option at Droitwich Spa.</p>	<p>As indicated in the WRIS, there is a significant shortfall in car parking requirements at stations in Worcestershire. It is therefore one of our key priorities to review car parking provision and explore additional capacity opportunities wherever possible. Droitwich Station falls into this category.</p>
<p>Also needs to be co-ordinated with the West Midlands transport strategy. Disappointing recently to hear that the West Midlands were planning to include Redditch in their “Oyster” card plans but NOT Droitwich and Bromsgrove. Also trips between Bromsgrove and Alvechurch by train generally need to be via University??</p>	<p>We are planning to work with West Midlands Rail on the development of their own Rail Investment Strategy ensuring that the needs of Worcestershire are appropriately represented in the final document, including factors such as ticketing strategy and service patterns.</p>
<p>Any extra trains that open up the south of the country without the need to go into Birmingham first is a great idea. Likewise any extra investment in capacity and services is always welcomed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>
<p>I think improving links from Bromsgrove towards Cheltenham, Gloucester, Newport and Bristol is much needed and requires scarcely any investment as far as I can see. With the new station in place and three electric Cross-City trains an hour to Bromsgrove, Cross Country services to Cardiff could skip the University stop and call at Bromsgrove instead, providing better onward connections south for all stations between New Street and Bromsgrove. I would like to see two platforms at Worcester Parkway on the Cotswold line from the outset, or capacity constraints will surely limit its usefulness.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and support for proposed service enhancements between Bromsgrove and the South-West. This is proposed within the WRIS as Conditional Output WAB2, in addition to the existing Cross-Country services between Birmingham and Bristol, thus maximising accessibility for passengers.</p> <p>The Cotswold Line through Worcestershire Parkway is currently single-track and thus only 1 platform needs to be provided from opening. A second platform can be provided within the station’s design if and when required at a later stage.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>Why not talk to Chiltern Railways who already operate an excellent through service from Kidderminster to London Marylebone? If extended south to Droitwich and Worcester it would be a little slower than the Great Western service to Paddington but would also open up direct journey opportunities to Banbury and High Wycombe. Also they are much cheaper fares than Great Western. Also, probably not possible in this age of competing companies, but years ago there were a few circular services, London-Worcester-Birmingham-Banbury-London.</p>	<p>Economic modelling within the WRIS has shown that enhanced services between Worcester and London Paddington are most beneficial for the County's economy. With these enhanced frequency, faster journey time services calling at Oxford it would allow passengers to interchange for a short onward journey to Banbury or High Wycombe.</p>
<p>If Cross Country made Bromsgrove a call on some of their Newcastle/ Manchester to Bristol/Plymouth/Penzance services there would be no need for the additional 'local' service from Bromsgrove to Bristol.</p>	<p>The Cross-Country service call at Bromsgrove is due to cease following the introduction of the new timetable in 2018. Calls in long-distance Cross Country trains are challenging to achieve when these impact upon through passengers' journey times. The WRIS objective is to gain these calls at Worcestershire Parkway. The concept of a Worcestershire – Bristol regional service would provide connections to these long-distance services at Worcestershire Parkway, whilst also providing regular connectivity between places such as University, Bromsgrove, Worcester, Ashchurch for Tewkesbury, Gloucester etc. which are unlikely to benefit from long-distance Cross Country calls.</p>
<p>The proposed hourly train service from Kidderminster to Paddington via Droitwich Spa is particularly welcome Such a service should also compete on price and availability with the Chiltern Railways service to London Marylebone</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.</p>
<p>Droitwich Spa to Bromsgrove single track section must be returned to is double track status and fully electrified Unfortunately all heritage signalling between Bromsgrove – Worcester – Hereford must be replaced now and improved train running implemented immediately after. The Cheltenham – Evesham – Redditch – Barnt Green – Birmingham link needs to be re-installed since some IDIOT decided to return the Cross City Line to Bromsgrove after its thankful demise in the early 1990s. This will allow an easier by-pass to the Lickey Incline when the Cross City Lines have to be stacked between Bromsgrove – Barnt Green – Longbridge due to operational problems. None of the suggested improvements take account of the improved atmospheric situation by introducing electrification on the Worcester – Birmingham services on all routes</p>	<p>One of the Conditional Outputs within the WRIS promotes the doubling of the line between Droitwich Spa and Stoke Works junction along with re-signalling of the line (see page 86 of the WRIS for further details). The level of development that has taken place in Redditch since the closure of the line to Evesham would prohibit re-opening of this line. We believe that enhancement of the Birmingham – Bristol line would be a more cost effective option.</p>



Respondee Comment	WCC Response
Bromsgrove needs more services long distance, especially southbound. I work in Gloucestershire and there is only one direct train per day to Cheltenham. There also needs to be more options to connect to London via Worcester and Paddington. I fully support the increase in services to Birmingham, to a train every 20 minutes. I hope there is also provision for later trains in the evening so we can enjoy a night out.	Thank you for your comments and support for proposed service enhancements between Bromsgrove and the South-West. This is proposed within the WRIS as Conditional Output WAB2. In addition, Conditional Output NCL1 will provide enhanced services between Worcester and London Paddington.
Strong emphasis needs to be made on improving facilities at Worcester Shrub Hill, particularly in providing a lift / bridge between platforms.	Despite this being on Network Rail's delivery plan for some time, unfortunately it has not yet been progressed. Worcestershire County Council will include it as part of the Shrub Hill Station Masterplan and strongly lobby the rail industry accordingly.
Faster express services to Oxford and London -	Our number one priority for Worcestershire is to achieve two trains per hour between Worcester and London. This may require dualling of parts of the North Cotswold Line and infrastructure works around Worcester. We are working hard with the rail industry to bring this forward sooner than is currently envisaged by the rail industry, and are part of the newly-established North Cotswold Line Task Force of local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships seeking to achieve this.
As a resident of Bromsgrove I feel there is a lack of commitment to developing the new station at Bromsgrove. The station is a massive investment in the county yet it is only shown as a stop on the BHM-WOR line. It needs to be shown as a major stopping and transfer station on the Birmingham / Bristol line. The county will have 2 stops for Cross Country/Long Distance North South Trains. Bromsgrove has the highest passenger growth and the most car parking capacity in the county at present. It is not just a local commuter town but a major driver for jobs and has a latent requirement for long distance rail travel. In addition it will be the last station on the Birmingham cross city line. Well placed to develop those long distance journeys. This can only happen if Cross Country long distance trains stop at Bromsgrove.	WRIS Conditional Output WAB2 seeks to provide direct services between Bromsgrove – Cheltenham Spa – Bristol in order to significantly enhance access to the south-west without the need for residents to first travel into Birmingham. The new train timetable from 2018 will also significantly improve services to and from the station and therefore provide additional capacity on trains for passengers.
This setting achievable targets which given the increasing importance of Rail is critical to business success in terms of indigenous growth and attracting inward investment. The frequency and speed of service are equally important and should remain central goals, as current, projected travel times are slow.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
WYTHALL CONNECTIONS ARE POOR, THE STATION NEEDS INVESTMENT	The challenge at Wythall is that the station is land-locked and the provision of car parking or other enhanced facilities is therefore very restricted. We instead support options that would further enhance the nearby Whitlocks End station, which has more land availability, and the potential for development as a major railway hub.
I understand all of the developments to the rail network, but due to the rural nature of the county I feel there should have been joined up thinking with regards to the bus service so that people can access the train stations more easily in the first place.	Noted. Access to stations will be considered as part of the station development plans. Worcestershire County Council will work with all bus operators servicing the county in terms of expanding their commercial services to integrate with rail provision.
A three times an hour service between Bromsgrove and Cheltenham would be excellent and justify the improvements made at Bromsgrove station. It is currently ridiculous if one is travelling South from Bromsgrove to Cardiff or Bristol to have to first go 15 miles north to B'ham. It would be even better if the South & South West trains stopped at either Longbridge, Barnt Green or Bromsgrove.	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support for enhanced services between Bromsgrove and the South-West as proposed under Conditional Output WAB2.
All improvements are welcome	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
I strongly support this new rail strategy	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>I support the WRIS because it seeks to enhance and extend the rail links from within the county to other towns and cities that residents would be willing to travel regularly to/from for work and leisure purposes. Provision of regular, reliable train services are key to choosing travel by rail rather than by road. The increase in volume of traffic both within Worcestershire and the UK as a whole is unsustainable and already causes: major delays due to congestion, unacceptable numbers of road death casualties, air pollution and sedentary stressful lifestyles that contribute to obesity and ill health. Good local and regional rail services with affordable fares would enable the train to be a viable alternative method of travel for many people who now use their car. Such rail services are to be found throughout Europe and are used without question by thousands of commuters in their large cities. I would like to see Ashchurch for Tewkesbury to be included in the planning of the regional services from Worcestershire. It was a newly built Parkway station with plenty of car parking, yet shortly after it was opened the number of services to it was severely limited. My husband would have used it to travel back to Bromsgrove after cycling down for work meetings nearby, only to find that there were no viable services to Bromsgrove. I am particularly enthusiastic about services from Bromsgrove connecting to Cheltenham as this opens up travel to Bristol &amp; SW and to Cardiff &amp; S Wales without wasting time travelling via Birmingham New Street.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support for enhanced services between Bromsgrove and the South-West as proposed under Conditional Output WAB2. Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Station is within Gloucestershire but we will seek to work with them to establish what options are available to improve the train service pattern at the station.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>The proposal to have trains from Bromsgrove to Cheltenham, Gloucester and beyond is essential. I currently make twice weekly visits to Cheltenham from Bromsgrove and the earliest train I can get from Bromsgrove is 8.10 am on a weekday arriving at Cheltenham 9.32 with a change and wait at Worcester Foregate St. As a result I have to travel north to University, cross the line and come back passing Bromsgrove en route but not stopping. This adds considerably to the time the journey takes (more than double that of a direct train), adds to the congestion on the train from Bromsgrove to University where we are packed like sardines if indeed we can get on the train and the journey costs me a third more! The same happens in reverse when I cannot get a connecting train to Bromsgrove via Worcester between 4 and 8 pm ( very popular travel times) unless I catch a train to Birmingham New St or University cross the line, wait for a train and come back south. I consider this to be totally unfair to have to pay excess fares to travel via Birmingham when no service is provided via Bromsgrove. My suggestion would be to cancel the stop at University and instead stop at Bromsgrove in both directions to and from Cheltenham.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support for enhanced services between Bromsgrove and the South-West as proposed under Conditional Output WAB2.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>The omission of the reopening of the Honeybourne to Stratford upon Avon railway line is a severe mistake. There is a need for a Worcester to Birmingham rail service via Solihull especially in view of the massive development to take place at Long Marston. Unless this line is reopened traffic congestion will become even more intolerable than it is now. A further study is vital and this railway reopened.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>
<p>I do not believe that Worcester Parkway will serve Worcester in a sustainable way; interchange options there will be poor given the uneven timetable on the Cotswold line and recently published aspirations for Cross Country to stop serving Bromsgrove in order to call at the new station. From that perspective therefore Worcester Parkway will instead be primarily accessed by car, which is not an environmentally sustainable way of providing transport to or from Worcester. On one hand the document states that there will be significant additional housing west of the River Severn, but then does not include consideration of an additional station at Henwick or St Johns, nor at Fernhill Heath to provide options for shorter distance commutes by road. Connectivity between Worcester and towns further along the River Severn (Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol) would be better served by more frequent direct trains than by changing at Worcester Parkway.</p>	<p>We recognise the demand for train services west of Worcester and are actively investigating options for a new parkway railway station in this area. Fernhill Heath has a number of issues that limits its viability for a new station (including access and proximity to Droitwich Spa station – with resultant negative impact on train timetables).</p> <p>WRIS Conditional Output WAB1/2 seeks to provide direct services between Worcester – Cheltenham Spa – Gloucester – Bristol in order to significantly enhance access to the south-west without the need to change at Worcestershire Parkway.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
My principal comment is that passengers from Bromsgrove are required to travel to Birmingham or Worcester to access southbound services to Cardiff, Bristol and Exeter, and that now we have a superb new station, this needs to change.	WRIS Conditional Output WAB2 seeks to provide direct services between Bromsgrove – Cheltenham Spa – Bristol in order to significantly enhance access to the south-west without the need for residents to first travel into Birmingham.
Car parking provisions at many Worcestershire stations is poor. For example, there is little to no parking at Droitwich Spa, Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Foregate Street stations. At Droitwich Spa in particular there is disused land adjacent to the station that could be acquired for car parking. However, this should ideally be free to rail passengers, otherwise it risks not being used, and with an increase in train services that would lead to an increase in parking in surrounding residential and industrial areas by rail users.	As indicated in the WRIS, there is a significant shortfall in car parking requirements at stations in Worcestershire. It is therefore, one of our key priorities to review car parking provision and explore additional capacity opportunities wherever possible. Droitwich Station falls into this category.
Keep investing and making it easier to get to major towns and cities from Bromsgrove without having to go into Bham New Street	Thank you for your comment. We welcome your support.
WBA2 I trust these will be direct services to the stations mentioned without stopping at the intermediate stations	The exact service pattern is still to be determined but our intention would be for the WAB2 trains to call at the major stations along the Bristol – Birmingham line.
I feel that there is lack of consideration for the parking situation at Droitwich Station. I have undertaken a survey at random recently and found that there were approximately 150 vehicles parked either on the official car park or in the vicinity to avoid the excessive charges currently applied. The car parking forecast in the report suggests 89 spaces will be required by 2043 which I would suggest is a gross underestimate and takes little account of any new housing or other developments in the town.	As indicated in the WRIS, there is a significant shortfall in car parking requirements at stations in Worcestershire. It is therefore, one of our key priorities to review car parking provision and explore additional capacity opportunities wherever possible. Droitwich Station falls into this category.
Couldn't find information on detail of Bromsgrove – Kidderminster direct trains	We are not proposing direct trains between Bromsgrove and Kidderminster as there is no existing viable rail connection. Conditional Outputs WAB1 / WAB2 would provide new services to the south-west via Droitwich Spa – where an interchange could take place to reach either of the two towns in question.
It is important that the necessary infrastructure is put in at Kidderminster Station to cope with growing demand. This is in respect of car parking at the station. Funding needs to be secured for a multi storey/decked car park and where possible work under taken on the road network o make it easier by car. I do not think that Blakedown should be heavily relied on as a second station for Wyre Forest. Blakedown is a village and thousands of traffic movements there for where the station is located are not practical.	A Wyre Forest Rail Strategy will be developed to cover all stations in the District. This will outline the development of Kidderminster station which is likely to be brought forward for delivery in phases according to funding availability. Car parking will also form a key part of this strategy.

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
See Q3: Also there is no attempt to restructure the Birmingham service through Worcester which is currently a mismatch of Foregate Street and Shrub Hill with often the need for passengers to shuttle between the two. One would have thought this a priority.	We are planning to work with West Midlands Rail as part of the development of their own Rail Investment Strategy ensuring issues such as this are highlighted and fully considered.
We should not forget villages with increased housing numbers that are on a rail network	The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy looks at improving all stations across the County, including the provision of additional car parking spaces and improved access wherever possible.
As a Hereford resident I'm disappointed that connections to Hereford are hardly mentioned	Comments noted. Our top priority is to achieve journey time and frequency benefits between London, Oxford, Worcester and Hereford along the North Cotswold Line. This will be emphasised more strongly in the WRIS revision. Herefordshire County Council are also a member of the North Cotswold Line Task Force Group which has been recently established to realise this vision.
Whilst we understand the practical difficulties of re-instating the northern end of the Honeybourne to Stratford line we consider that it should at least remain on the radar in LTP4 given the amount of development planned at Stratford.	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>



Respondee Comment	WCC Response
I strongly support increasing the frequency and speed of trains between Worcester City, Worcestershire Parkway, Kidderminster and London, the South-West, North-West and North-East England and Scotland. I support having good connectivity to HS2. I support upgrading infrastructure to enable the above.	Noted. We welcome your support.
Transport infrastructure should not be looked at as a solely local matter. Costs and benefits are shared amongst a number of stakeholders. Opportunities of working with adjacent authorities should be sought to achieve mutual benefit. The aspiration of Stratford upon Avon to improve its rail connection with London and the Thames Valley, could be a natural fit with Worcestershire improving its connectivity with Birmingham Airport and HS2.	We agree that opportunities of working with adjacent authorities should be sought to achieve mutual benefits resulting from improved rail connectivity. We have recently established the North Cotswold Line Task Force to work with neighbouring councils and LEPs to bring forward major enhancements in services between London – Oxford – Worcester – Hereford more swiftly than under current rail industry plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's remit.
finish redoubling the Cotswold line and Worcester desperately needs more car parking at one of its main stations	Noted and agreed.
Whilst I welcome the proposal to provide parking at Wythall Station on the Birmingham to Stratford Upon Avon line this seems very aspirational and not afforded the prominence that it needs.	Worcestershire County Council recognises that car parking is one of the key reasons why rail demand is suppressed in the County (why people do not travel by rail). Hence, car parking at Worcestershire's railway stations is one of the top priorities for the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy.
It will bring growth to the area when further housing is added to the area it will also ease congestion in the centre of Stratford crossing the river.	Apologies, we are not sure what point you are trying to make here.

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>Whilst we welcome much of what is in the document, particularly the intention to prioritise improvements to the North Cotswold Line which includes Pershore. However, the data for daily return passenger journeys depends on a method that is liable to underestimate the actual number of journeys of this type. We therefore feel that the number of return passengers using Pershore station has been undercounted. The data compiled by the Office of Rail and Road is based on ticket sales and as a consequence where a station like Pershore's has no ticket facilities at all, as well as no gating facilities, there is a likely undercounting. We do recognise that WCC need to reply on the best data available but we would urge WCC be mindful of Pershore station's circumstances and how these affect the data collected. Moreover, the Town Council would emphasise the tremendous growth in population that Pershore is experiencing, and will continue to experience, near the station. Given the pressure on the road network that this growth poses, we would anticipate a disproportionate rise in demand for rail services. Although the draft Rail Investment Strategy rightly identifies the lack of parking provision as constraint on access to rail services, the close proximity of many new homes to Pershore station mitigates this factor in so far as it affects Pershore in that all the new homes are within easy walking distance of the station.</p>	<p>Worcestershire County Council recognises that there is no gating facility or station office at Pershore Station and that there are inevitably passengers travelling without tickets. As part of the ongoing discussions with GWR, revenue protection mechanisms are being sought to address this issue. Meanwhile, ticket sale information is the most reliable way of determining patronage. There is a suppressed demand for rail travel across the county exacerbated by lack of car parking. Additional car parking capacity at Pershore station is currently being developed.</p>
<p>Wish every authority would do something similar.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support</p>
<p>Would make an excellent link to Oxford</p>	<p>Thank you for your support</p>
<p>Freight also has to be encouraged back onto the railways – whether by placing industrial parks close to the rail lines (and major roadways) rather than next to motorway junctions or new outlets the better. With fuel costs expected to rise railfreight is the only way forward – other councils have recognised this ie Hams Hall, Daventry, Telford, London Gateway. Don't hold your breath on Worcester parkway being a success as people who want to travel to Worcester or from elsewhere in the county eg Kidderminster, Droitwich, Malvern will never use it as it is at least 3 miles from town (plus if they are travelling south they would rather catch the train to Cheltenham</p>	<p>We recognise that rail freight has the potential to reduce road based (lorry) deliveries. However, there is not an obvious critical mass of distribution within Worcestershire to warrant development of a new rail freight terminal at this time. Instead our focus will be to support enhancements to the line between Bristol and Birmingham which is already an important freight artery through our County.</p>
<p>A well thought out and realistic plan if the authorities are serious about the development of the area. Improved rail facilities are essential to support this development. The way forward is not via increased road usage.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>I agree with the major points of the strategy. However, I believe that electrification of the North Cotswold line should be a low priority, other issues are more important/practical. The plans for Worcester Parkway need to cater for the dualling of the Evesham-Worcester section, and not cause a major upheaval when/if it happens. Station car parking is critical for increased usage. The continuing situation at Pershore is a disgrace, and Evesham is becoming a car park problem. Both towns are rapidly increasing in size due to housing development. The 'rolling stock policy ' of GWR on the N. Cotswold line is opaque. 3 car TURBO trains run through to London, starting from Worcester and frequently full by Evesham, and the resulting travelling conditions are terrible. The future of 5 car ADELANTE trains seems unclear, although ideal for this line ( if there were enough of them). The lumbering HST's are totally unsuitable for the N. Cotswold line, with it's frequent stops and short platforms.</p>	<p>Worcestershire County Council is not promoting the electrification of the North Cotswold Line as part of the strategy for, greater services between London – Oxford – Worcester. Parts of the line may need to be dualled to realise this vision but the extent of this (if required) is still to be determined. Car Parking is also a priority of the strategy and a project to increase car parking capacity at Pershore Station is already in development. Worcestershire County Council is not in a position to comment on rolling stock.</p>
<p>More consideration and support for the rail reinstatement from Stratford – upon – Avon into Worcestershire to link with the Cotswold line</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>As a resident in North Worcestershire (Barnt Green) and a rail commuter to Cheltenham Spa, I suffer daily due to the lack of southbound services from Bromsgrove to Cheltenham. Also, with my child's grandparents living in Cheltenham, this also inhibits our family contact and access to childcare. From Barnt Green it is necessary to travel north at least 10 miles to Birmingham or University station in order to catch the southbound CrossCountry service towards Cardiff. As a result, journeys take at least twice as long (by 40 minutes) and cost twice as much (by £2300 on an annual season ticket), in comparison with the two direct services from Bromsgrove that currently operate for northbound outward journeys only. I am very supportive of the proposed direct service between Bromsgrove and Cheltenham (conditional output WAB2) as this would provide the much needed southbound connectivity for the Bromsgrove area. However, on reading the strategy in further detail, I believe that despite this, there remains a real possibility that the resulting provision may actually worsen rather than improve. 1. It seems that improved southbound connectivity from Bromsgrove is not actually a clear recommended output in the strategy. The headlined "regional service between Kidderminster and Bromsgrove, Worcester and Cheltenham Spa" (as at <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp">http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp</a> and repeated in local newspapers) is, on closer inspection listed as an 'either/or' option between Kidderminster or Bromsgrove. This seems to be a significant misrepresentation of the benefits that could lead to respondents being supportive of the strategy without being aware of this limitation. 2. Whilst Section 7.4 identifies that there is a choice between one train per hour on each route, or two trains per hour on only one of the routes, I do not see any consideration given to this choice, with the outputs offering only the two alternatives favouring exclusively one or other route. It seem naturally more appropriate to split the capacity between the two routes, so why is this choice not recommended? 3. If it is necessary to proceed with only providing this service from either Kidderminster or Bromsgrove, I would clearly only support the Bromsgrove option. Only the proposed Bromsgrove route capitalises on the investment in new stations at Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway, and failing to connect these stations would risk an increased sunk cost invested</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your support of Condition Output WAB2. As you have rightly identified there are options between providing services to the south-west starting at either Bromsgrove or Kidderminster. Further analysis and work will be required to determine which is the most suitable option, or mix of options, both in terms of economic and social benefits (accessibility). The objective of the WRIS is to identify priorities for further work and investment, rather than determine the specific timetable pattern of any given recommendation.</p> <p>A new service from Kidderminster, via Worcester to the south-west would enhance the City's accessibility and encourage sustainable use of the existing town stations. You are right to note that there are variances in the value of the two options, reflecting the different journey times along the two routes – the higher value being that quoted.</p> <p>We will clarify the text within the report to state that there are only Bromsgrove calls in ONE direction in the morning and evening peak. Apologies for this misunderstanding. The economic value presented is based on anticipated future provision (i.e. a new train service that is not currently provided).</p>

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>in building these stations which would be under-utilised due to not having the services required. Additionally, amending the current CrossCountry route between Cardiff and Nottingham to stop at Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway on an hourly basis would achieve the benefits with no real diversion from route and minimal impact on journey times. However, if this service was diverted by Kidderminster and Worcester Shrub Hill it would result in significant diversion and delay and actually considerably worsen the connectivity from the Bromsgrove area because of the additional delay involved in travelling via Worcester or Birmingham. 4. Lastly, I have to query the model on which the comparative benefits of the Kidderminster and Bromsgrove options were considered. Table 3.6 states that the current Cardiff-Nottingham service from Bromsgrove is “1 train only calls at Bromsgrove in each direction in the peak periods”, which is incorrect. In fact the service is worse than this: we have 1 train only calling at Bromsgrove in ONE direction only in the peak periods – southbound at 1750 and 1850 and northbound at 0721 and 0757, which in effect is no viable service at all for residents of Bromsgrove travelling southbound on business or commuting. Furthermore, the 2017 CrossCountry ‘Future Timetable Consultation’ proposes to remove this stop at Bromsgrove altogether for this service on the basis of alternative services to/from Birmingham. This change would further worsen southbound connectivity from Bromsgrove and I do not see this recognised at all in the strategy. So, from which baseline provision is the evaluation of GVA/Jobs for WAB2 Bromsgrove based on – the overstated provision given; the current lower provision which may soon to be discontinued, or the future provision of no service at all? Unless you have accounted for the anticipated future provision this then the value of the proposed WAB2 Bromsgrove option will have been underestimated. Whilst very encouraged by the intent of the strategy to improve southbound connectivity from Bromsgrove, I cannot unconditionally support this strategy whilst the proposed outputs are ambiguous and evaluation method is unclear, and possibly incorrect. I would welcome a response to clarify the position regarding these points and to explain plans to fully evaluate and consider options from Bromsgrove.</p>	

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
The Stratford Honeyborne link is a must.	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>
It would be vital to cope with growth that is happening in business and social travel especial south of Stratford completing links between Oxford and Worcester	See comments above.
Don't forget Birmingham New St line. Currently only one train an hour via Droitwich to New St from Worcester (2 via the slower, Snow Hill line). Would like to see two on each.	Noted. Infrastructure work in and around Worcester will need to be completed to facilitate this and this is one of our top priorities. It is also a priority of Midlands Connect.
This is a small stretch of rail which could massively relieve traffic and bring investment and jobs to the areas. It's a no-brainer, it must be allowed to develop.	Noted
i welcome the attention to rail infrastructure lobbying to achieve these very challenging objectives will be enhanced if worcestershire people are encouraged to organise to assist the council and other key stakeholders there will be opportunities to engage the public in supporting the achievement of specific objectives lobbying to achieve steps 2 and 3 should start immediately not be ramped up during the life of the plan	Thank you. Your support is welcomed.

Respondee Comment	WCC Response
<p>I support strongly the proposed direct service to Cheltenham from Bromsgrove. I travel very frequently between Cheltenham (where I live) and Barnt Green, which is a journey requiring time spent on a loop: the train passes through Barnt Green but never stops so I have to go on to BHM or UNI to take a train back to Barnt Green. And then the reverse to return to Cheltenham. It has become so inconvenient and wasteful of time that sometimes I drive instead, but would prefer the train. To be able to travel between Cheltenham and Bromsgrove directly would be ideal. Currently this is not possible, although I see that the strategy document actually misrepresents the reality: re. the Cardiff-Nottingham service, Table 3.6 states that “one train only calls at Bromsgrove in each direction in the peak periods.” But in fact the service is WORSE than that! There is one train only calling at Bromsgrove in ONE direction only in the peak periods: northbound in the morning and southbound in the evening. This serves only one community and not two. Those who wish to make that journey southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening have NO service at all, other than to make journeys involving loops. And from my own point of view and schedule, those single train times do not suit me as I wish to travel at non-peak times. I would urge you to consider providing this connectivity, and indeed to provide it! And please don’t set it up against/in competition with proposals involving Kidderminster; these are not genuine alternatives. I would not support the ‘Kidderminster option’ because it would have deleterious effects on travel to Bromsgrove.</p>	<p>WRIS Conditional Output WAB2 seeks to provide direct services between Bromsgrove – Cheltenham Spa – Bristol in order to significantly enhance access to the south-west without the need for residents to first travel into Birmingham.</p> <p>The new train timetable from 2018 will also significantly improve services between Birmingham and Bromsgrove and therefore provide additional capacity on trains for passengers.</p>



**6.9** Respondents were then asked if there were any other issues that they thought ought to be covered in the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy. These are shown in Table 6.3 below, together with WCC officer responses.

**Table 6.3: Any Other Issues**

Comment	WCC Response
<p>More support for the Pershore station reconfiguration proposals which have been on the cards for years but no progress made.</p>	<p>WCC is actively working with key stakeholders to progress the car parking issues at Pershore Station. It is hoped that these will be brought forward for delivery in the short term.</p>
<p>I think it essential that the railway between Honeybourne and Stratford upon Avon is reopened and a service between Worcester, Stratford upon Avon and Leamington Spa operated. A huge development is to take place at Long Marston and good rail links are vital and essential.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>There also needs to be consideration for the links to New Street. Currently there is only one train per hour. This is the fastest route to Birmingham but is often over crowded with staff advising that commuters get the slower Snow Hill route. There also needs to be consideration to where the trains stop and end to reduce people driving to the stations. The routes should cover Worcester Foregate Street, Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Parkway. Currently, trains in the evening are the longer Snow Hill route and stop at Worcester Shrub Hill. Linked to this, I think there should be consideration of how late the trains run for. The last train to and from Worcester is popular and helps feed the late night economy. However, the train back from Worcester is too early and thus people result to car or taxis.</p>	<p>We will work with WMR as part of their developing Rail Investment Strategy to promote better rail links between Worcester and Birmingham, including a later train, a more standardised timetable and additional on-train capacity.</p>
<p>There will be two trains each hour to London Paddington but what will the return trains be? At present after 5pm, the only options without going via New Street are the 5.22pm, 6.22pm etc. The train time is also approximately 2 and half hours long. Again, it's often quicker to take the New Street route. The travel duration needs to reduce or have a mix of faster trains at peak hour and slower trains at more stops outside of peak.</p>	<p>It is too early to comment on specific service enhancements. Train timetable options will be considered as part of the remit of the recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force, taking into account demand, rolling stock availability and train pathing requirements.</p>
<p>There MUST be provision for two platforms at the Parkway station, as if not done at the time it will never be built, and the single track from Evesham is a great hindrance to speeding up the trains on the Cotswold line.</p>	<p>Worcestershire Parkway has been designed to accommodate the future double-tracking of the North Cotswold Line should this be required to achieve our aim of greater train services between Worcester – Oxford – London.</p>
<p>Fast lines to B'ham New Street</p>	<p>Apologies, we are unsure of the point you are trying to make.</p>
<p>The opportunities to link with local bus services to provide less need to drive to stations seems to have been ignored.</p>	<p>Provision for transport mode integration will be considered for all rail infrastructure projects.</p>
<p>There is potential for a commuter service from Bewdley and Foley Park to run into Birmingham. This would ease congestion in Wyre Forest. Line speed increases should be prioritised south of Stourbridge to make journey times more competitive against road transport.</p>	<p>A direct commuter service along the Severn Valley Railway to Birmingham, via Kidderminster, has been considered and found unviable due to the complications of operating regular mainline service along a heritage railway. However, we are committed to working with the SVR to understand if regular, peak, commuter services to Kidderminster can be provided.</p>
<p>Benchmark against Warwick Parkway as this is currently the cheapest and quickest option combined for Worcester and surrounds. I will keep my fingers crossed!</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments, and support for Worcestershire Parkway.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
Additional connections need to be in place for visitors using the stations to save on the impact to the environment, better bus services to Elgar's Birthplace, the Fold, Spetchley Park Gardens and other surrounding attractions.	Provision for transport mode integration will be considered for all rail infrastructure projects.
If there is to be more trains per hour stopping at each of the 4 manned stations on the Cotswold Line, can there be at least more staff available to help. The stationmaster at Evesham does a fantastic job, but due to the rise in rail travel in recent years, he struggles NOW with one train each way per hour. We need a second window at Evesham to cope with the influx of more travellers. And where will these extra passengers park their cars?	We will work with the GWR as part of the NCLTF to understand the implications of service enhancements on passenger demands and staffing levels. The provision of additional car parking is something that we will be considering across the County as a key priority within the WRIS.
Yes. I am in support of the Investment Strategy, I will benefit from the trains to London because of work travel, and leisure. However I find it vital that efforts go into improving the rail service we already have in Worcestershire. Trains are incredibly crowded - often using only 3 carriages when travelling to Birmingham, to the point where passengers are squished on-board or sometimes not able to board at all. If the Strategy comes into force, would this be the same for the trains to London?	<p>We will continue to work with West Midlands Rail to identify ways in which capacity on trains to and from Birmingham can be increased, including as part of their forthcoming West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy. Additional service enhancements are also to be delivered as part of the new West Midlands Rail franchise and we will update the WRIS to include reference to these commitments.</p> <p>The consideration of enhanced services between Worcester and London will include the impact on passenger demand and rolling stock capacity.</p>
The document does not seem to mention the time between these new commitments of example 2 trains per hour between Worcester and London will run, it would be very beneficial to have late night services such that it is possible to access evening entertainment such as West End shows which finish around 22:00 and be able to return the same evening, the only current solution is to drive to Birmingham International.	It is too early to comment on specific service enhancements, however we agree that later evening services would be very beneficial. Train timetable options will be considered as part of the remit of the recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force, taking into account passenger demand, rolling stock availability and train pathing requirements.
Additional Birmingham / Worcester trains stopping at Barnt Green would be helpful for people trying to get from Redditch to Worcester and beyond- also why are there no such trains at the weekend?	Additional service enhancements are to be delivered as part of the new West Midlands Rail franchise and we will update the WRIS to include reference to these commitments.

Comment	WCC Response
<p>Without a doubt there is a need to improve the quality and frequency of all services across the county - whether or not this achieved through electrification of the Snow Hill lines, or improvements to the track, signalling and rolling stock. Is there an argument for, say, a Kidderminster to Droitwich to New Street service, even though this would require a reversal at Droitwich. Even the current timetables through Droitwich such allow that option.</p>	<p>We will continue to work with West Midlands Rail to identify ways in which the quality of services to and from Birmingham can be improved, including as part of their forthcoming West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy.</p> <p>Additional service enhancements are to be delivered as part of the new West Midlands Rail franchise and we will update the WRIS to include reference to these commitments.</p>
<p>Park and ride (FREE car parking) at Rushwick as top priority as outlined in reasons for strongly opposing the strategy.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments, they are noted.</p>
<p>The travel costs per mile on GWR especially on the Cotswold line are exceeding high compared to both car travel and other rail routes such as the Chiltern line to London. Car parking charges and limited spaces reduces/limits the number of passengers travelling on the Cotswold line. Worcestershire should take the lead to mandate more reasonable track access charges - which basically should remain the same for double the number of trains - and franchise terms which drive up the fares and play an active role increasing the number of car parking spaces available. The basis for the calculation of the number of parking spaces is good but ignores the fact that passenger numbers are limited because there's often no parking available at Stations such as Pershore and Evesham. The strategy ignores or underplays the importance of (a) rail access to airports eg the Stansted service should stop at Worcester Parkway, the Paddington Service should stop at Heathrow and not Slough, a direct service to Birmingham International is highly desirable. (b) the value of the services to the South West (Plymouth etc) and North West (Manchester etc) stopping at Parkway is probably under-estimated and some of these services used to stop at Ashchurch so the timetabling argument is not valid (c) to get a viable connecting service from the Cotswold line to Birmingham and elsewhere, more trains need to stop at Parkway. The limitation to Diesel power on the Cotswold line suggests that routine a Kidderminster-Marylebone service via Oxford has merit. The capacity issues North of Worcester suggest that a Kidderminster service dividing at Worcester to go South and to Oxford might be viable although this would intrinsically providing a smaller capacity train for a stopping service to Oxford (and possibly</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>WCC is unable to alter track access charges which are set nationally by the Office for Road and Rail for each 5 year Control Period. However, we will work with the train operators to promote cheap and advanced purchase fares as part of the remit of the North Cotswold Line Task Force.</p> <p>We recognise that passenger demand is suppressed due to a County-wide shortage of car parking spaces and addressing this issue is one of the top priorities within the WRIS.</p> <p>The focus of the WRIS is to prioritise options which will have the greatest positive impact on passengers and hence we have not detailed all the various service enhancements possible although we would welcome additional services that provide airport links and any which call at Worcestershire Parkway.</p> <p>We support the continued use of the rail network to handle freight traffic, including on the Bristol-Birmingham and NCL.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>beyond). Platform limitations mean that connecting services at Shrub Hill will continue to be problematic. I have concerns about the acceleration of the bi-mode trains that may result in poorer average speeds given the frequent stops on the Cotswold line. The services from South Wales and the South West to the North East are generally poor. (This may be due to historical poor performance of through services at Birmingham New Street). Worcestershire should play a role in the re-vitalisation of these services working with “both ends” of the route. The importance of rail freight is omitted from the strategy despite the increased volume of container goods and increased road haulage to local destinations in the absence of any freight handling. Instead freight trains are viewed as an inconvenience on both the Cotswold and Bristol-Birmingham routes. Network rail may have some relevant revised plans. The Worcestershire transport plan refers to additional parkway stations to the North and the West of Worcestershire but reference to these and their impact on the planned services is omitted from the strategy.</p>	
<p>Missing are: Worcester Shrub Hill area regeneration. Maximising train lengths on all Birmingham services with, if possible, bi-mode stock to use electric Birmingham-Bromsgrove. The pathetic bus service in Worcester generally and the complete absence of any attempt at integrating services and ticketing on the two, which is what this strategy should be about.</p>	<p>Details of the Worcester Shrub Hill Masterplan can be found on page 86 of the WRIS (amongst other locations). A new timetable will be introduced in 2018 between Bromsgrove and Birmingham following completion of Network Rail’s electrification works.</p> <p>The objective of the WRIS is not to address bus service issues within the County – please refer to the corresponding Passenger Transport Strategy within the LTP4. PlusBus train/bus tickets are already available from key Worcestershire stations including Worcester Foregate Street and Shrub Hill.</p>
<p>The Worcestershire Parkway Station should have the second platform built on the London line and then mothballed until the track can once again be doubled, this would probably save money in the long term.</p>	<p>Worcestershire Parkway has been designed to accommodate the future double-tracking of the North Cotswold Line should this be required to achieve our aim of greater train services between Worcester – Oxford – London.</p>
<p>Increased passenger capacity on lines via Droitwich. Clearly people want to use rail travel but the lack of seats and overcrowding is a deterrent and, or dangerous.</p>	<p>Additional frequency and capacity services are also going to be provided as part of the new West Midlands Rail Franchise. We will update the final version of the WRIS to include these details.</p>
<p>Ensure a regular reliable service with good clean and safe trains.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>
<p>Parking at Droitwich station needs to be addressed. With additional trains to London (which I support) the parking situation will only get worse.</p>	<p>The provision of additional car parking at stations across the County is one of the key priorities within the WRIS. This includes Droitwich Spa station.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
Parking at Droitwich station is in need of some investment. Also the local transport links within Droitwich should be considered for enhancement although most residents could cycle or walk to the town so this could be something to be reviewed in the future.	Provision for transport mode integration will be considered for all rail infrastructure projects.
Limitation of impact on surrounding countryside.	We agree that it is important to limit the impact of transport on the surrounding countryside, hence we are promoting the use of rail over road.
More car parking and more ticket machines or contactless ticketing - compatible with London and Birmingham if possible. Only concern is will Droitwich lose its market town feeling?	The provision of additional car parking at stations across the County is one of the key priorities within the WRIS. This includes Droitwich Spa station. We will also lobby the industry to provide enhanced ticketing options as part of our ongoing dialogue and engagement with Network Rail and train operators.
Consider services that cater for both short and longer distance travel with more parking or bus services at stations. So those requiring travel the longer distance can choose a train with fewer stops and travel by bus/ own transport to that station.	Thank you for your comments, they are noted.
On a personal note - later trains from Birmingham to Worcester would be an improvement. I was at 2 concerts one in Broad Street and at the NEC and the latest train was 10.30pm on both occasions - forcing me to drive. Not ideal as parking was a nightmare - it would have been so much better on the train.	Noted and agreed. We will work with West Midlands Rail as they develop their own Rail Investment Strategy to investigate options to provide later evening services between Worcester and Birmingham. There will also be some enhanced evening frequencies between Birmingham - Kidderminster / Birmingham – Worcester as part of the new West Midlands Rail Franchise.
New/reopening lines from pre-Beeching: Worcester- Bromyard, Redditch-Alcester-Honeybourne, etc. Possibility of a light rail system	The focus of the WRIS is to enhance services and capacity on existing rail lines rather than construct new in order to achieve best value for money by maximising the efficiency of the existing infrastructure.
Links to other modes of transport, generally First Bus and Diamond, and later services. Last bus connections from Bromsgrove train station are just after 8pm.	Provision for transport mode integration will be considered for all rail infrastructure projects.
Improvements to signalling in Droitwich, as over the years to many trains have bypassed Bromsgrove via Hagley, Kidderminster etc due to this issue.	We support signalling and track enhancements in and around Droitwich Spa as recognised within the WRIS (see page 86).
Investigate the possibility of a short section of extra track at Worcestershire Parkway so that services to/from Birmingham can proceed directly to/from Worcester Shrub Hill (in effect bypassing Droitwich but serving Worcestershire parkway). This would be a more useful option than re-doubling the Stoke Works - Droitwich section in my opinion.	This is a good suggestion, however, the cost of providing a chord between the North Cotswold Line and the Bristol-Birmingham line would be prohibitively expensive given the level difference between the two lines.
Redoubling of the line from Norton Junction to Kidderminster	The line from Norton Junction to Kidderminster is already double track.

Comment	WCC Response
Frequency and capacity of trains. Where you have one train an hour of two carriages, it is predictably so overcrowded as to be very unsafe.	Noted & agreed. We will continue to lobby the train operators for additional rolling stock capacity on key routes. Additional frequency and capacity services are also going to be provided as part of the new West Midlands Rail Franchise. We will update the final version of the WRIS to include these details.
The Paddington - Leamington Spa - Birmingham Snow Hill - Worcester - Evesham - Paddington and visa versa circular route should be re-instated as this will help in providing better Worcestershire to London services. The loops at Bordesley between Birmingham Snow Hill and New Street need re-instating to help easy problems when operational difficulties frequently occur. The University City train service (Nottingham - Birmingham - Worcester - Cardiff) should be re-instated as a stopping service at Bromsgrove following its removal in the early 21st Century. The station at Bromsgrove is not long enough for the frequent HST and 10 carriage Voyager services on the Cross Country services to stop at it.	<p>Our priority is to enhance services on the North Cotswold Line between Worcester and London in order to support Worcestershire's growing economy. A circular service via Birmingham is not required to achieve this aim.</p> <p>The Bordesley Chords are being promoted by Midlands Connect as part of their post-HS2 capacity enhancement schemes.</p> <p>The priority for Worcestershire's economic growth is to establish frequent, reliable links to the south-west which is why we are promoting Conditional Outputs WAB1/WAB2. The intention for long-distance Cross Country services is for them to stop at Worcestershire Parkway which will sufficiently cater for the train lengths.</p>
electrification of all Worcestershire passenger lines	The recent Secretary of State for Transport announcement in July 2017 has effectively put all future electrification schemes on indefinite hold. We will therefore need to find alternative solutions to electrification on routes within Worcestershire. We will update the WRIS to reflect this.
noise and environmental concerns in more train frequency	Whilst the introduction of new or more frequent rail services will undoubtedly create some additional noise and environmental concerns, this will be negligible when compared to the severe impact of journeys that would otherwise be made private car (congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, accidents etc.)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The doubling of the Stoke Works Droitwich line should be accompanied by a fly over at the main line junction to allow faster times and reduce congestion.</li> <li>2. There is no mention of developing new stations at Fernhill heath/Blackpole</li> <li>3. Regarding freight the old line between Dudley and Walsall via Wednesbury should be opened.</li> </ol>	A fly-over will be prohibitively expensive. Fernhill Heath and Blackpole stations have been considered and found to be unviable in terms of timetabling, access and other operational issues. Reopening old freight lines between Dudley and Walsall is a concern for West Midlands Rail.



Comment	WCC Response
The stations are under whelming, especially Shrub Hill, in terms of the Building, presentation, signage and condition. Whilst the immediate environment and signage continues the theme of the Station, waiting for potential redevelopment by the private sector cannot be relied on and more pro-active actions need to be taken.	We are developing a Masterplan for Shrub Hill Station which will be published later this year. Once done so, we will actively pursue its delivery in partnership with City, Council and rail industry stakeholders.
Development of Wythall Station and the Shakespeare Rail Line as a major rail commuter hub for access to Birmingham. Specifically prevision of a station car park and a more frequent train service (at least every 1/2 hour). Currently there is no car park (although land appears to be available adjacent to the station) and the train service only runs every hour.	The enhancement of the North Warwicks (Shakespeare) Line is primarily a concern for Warwickshire County Council (the route sits within their County boundary before briefly crossing Worcestershire into the greater Birmingham area). Whilst we recognise that Wythall station has an absence of car parking, we would prefer to see additional parking provided at nearby Whitlocks End which has capacity for an expanded / decked car park. We will work with West Midlands Rail to promote this.
WYTHALL CONNECTIONS ARE POOR, THE STATION NEEDS INVESTMENT	We agree that facilities at Wythall could be improved. We will work with the rail industry to identify what improvements could be made through the new West Midlands Rail franchise.
Parking - I presently drive into Birmingham rather than use the Bromsgrove station as I can park securely and for free at Northfield and other stations	A 250 space secure car park has now been provided at the new Bromsgrove Station, which has an annual parking charge of £360.00
A three times an hour service between Bromsgrove and Cheltenham would be excellent and justify the improvements made at Bromsgrove station. It is currently ridiculous if one is travelling South from Bromsgrove to Cardiff or Bristol to have to first go 15 miles north to B'ham. It would be even better if the South & South West trains stopped at either Longbridge, Barnt Green or Bromsgrove.	Noted and agreed. Thank you for your support for WRIS Conditional Output WAB2.
I would like to see Pershore station upgraded to include ticket machines, and ensure that London trains continue to stop at Pershore when the new strategy is implemented. Pershore is growing fast, with many new homes being built. It needs a station and some improvements would be welcome to encourage people to make good use of it.	The recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force will consider options to improve Pershore Station as part of its work to provide greater services between Worcester and London. The NCLTF's remit will also include consideration of the impact of new developments along the line of the route.
Emphasis on joined up travel strategies - timetables which allow connections with other bus and train routes. Rolling stock that allows room for luggage and the carriage of at least 6 bicycles per train.	Provision for transport mode integration will be considered for all rail projects.

Comment	WCC Response
<p>Longer term I feel you should be looking at a line joining Kidderminster, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Stratford and Warwick Parkway so that there would be no need to go via Birmingham.</p>	<p>This route cannot be provided because it is not possible to re-open the line between Redditch and Stratford upon Avon due to the amount of development that has taken place south of Redditch station.</p>
<p>As above, reopening the railway from Honeybourne to Stratford upon Avon.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>The strategy overlooks the potential future reinstatement of the line between Stratford - Upon - Avon and Honeybourne and the resulting opportunity for significant resulting journey growth for services between the Worcester/Oxford area and Stratford - Upon - Avon. These flows are significantly suppressed by the current prohibitively long journey times. Reinstatement of the route will aid management of the growing congestion in the Stratford area arising from present and future planned housing developments, in particular the new village at Long Marston, whilst simultaneously allowing rail to better tap into the tourist potential from the Thames Valley and wider local areas. Plans for the enhancement of the North Cotswold Line/Worcester areas should therefore ensure they take into account the potential future reinstatement of this section of the network.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>There is a need to re-consider the value of the Stratford-Honeybourne re-opening as this would provide an essential diversionary route between Birmingham and Oxford, offer an alternate route for passengers travelling between Worcester and Stratford, and also open up connectivity for passengers in the Vale of Evesham wishing to head towards Birmingham and the East. It is easy to say that portions of the line lie outside of Worcestershire, however this unfortunately seems to be used as a reason for inaction when co-operation between local authorities is required. It is environmentally irresponsible for a new town to be built at Long Marston without Rail access, and Worcestershire support would be needed to help other authorities to build the transport links that are required for a sustainable future.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>
<p>Car parking provisions at many Worcestershire stations is poor. For example, there is little to no parking at Droitwich Spa, Worcester Shrub Hill and Worcester Foregate Street stations. At Droitwich Spa in particular there is disused land adjacent to the station that could be acquired for car parking. However, this should ideally be free to rail passengers, otherwise it risks not being used, and with an increase in train services that would lead to an increase in parking in surrounding residential and industrial areas by rail users. An increase in the number of carriages operating is desperately needed, particularly on services to Birmingham New Street. I feel this could be provided by joining/dividing trains on the current Birmingham - Hereford route so that one portion continues to Hereford, and the other continues to Pershore and Evesham, providing better connectivity to the Evesham Valley without the need to change trains, and more carriages on existing Birmingham - Worcester trains.</p>	<p>The provision of additional car parking at stations across the County is one of the key priorities within the WRIS. This includes Droitwich Spa station.</p> <p>We agree that additional capacity should be provided, particularly on key routes to Birmingham. We will work with West Midlands Rail to explore opportunities as part of the development of their West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy. In addition, we will expand the final WRIS to include details about the additional frequency and capacity services that will be provided through the new West Midlands Rail franchise.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
Regularity of trains from Bromsgrove to and from Bham New Street especially after 8pm at a weekend . It's not 1960's!! Us rural folk like to go out in the big smoke !!	The new Bromsgrove electrification timetable will provide additional frequency of service from 2018. We will expand the final WRIS to include details about the additional frequency and capacity services that will be provided through the new West Midlands Rail franchise.
More capacity on peak services Worcester, Bromsgrove, Birmingham	We will expand the final WRIS to include details about the additional frequency and capacity services that will be provided through the new West Midlands Rail franchise.
There is no mention of trains to Malvern. Will there be connections from Worcester Parkway to Great Malvern? Are there any plans to improve the service to Hereford?	As part of our work to deliver service enhancements on the North Cotswold Line we will be considering how best to improve services west of Worcester towards Great Malvern & Hereford.
Rail service should be made more accessible especially for children going to schools in Worcester City, by re-opening Fernhill Heath Rail Halt. You will tell me that this will extend travel time and it is impossible to change the timetables, but these changes can be very easily implemented when there is a problem on the track or a broken down train.	We have considered Fernhill Heath station and for a variety of reasons, including insufficient capacity within the timetable and restricted access, this is not a viable scheme. Using emergency timetables as a proxy for what can be achieved during normal operation is not an accurate way to assess capacity within the timetable.
Yes. Some London trains are to commence and complete their journeys at Hereford as they do now.	As part of our work to deliver service enhancements on the North Cotswold Line we will be considering how best to improve services west of Worcester towards Great Malvern & Hereford.
Improved connections to Hereford	As part of our work to deliver service enhancements on the North Cotswold Line we will be considering how best to improve services west of Worcester towards Great Malvern & Hereford.
No, the practical issue of securing additional car parking at stations is covered and we would hope that there will be a concerted drive to deliver.	Thank you for your support for the WRIS.
Whatever happened to Worcester Parkway? Whether living in Bristol, Gloucester, Lancaster, Edinburgh, or right here at home, my family regularly have to work around the fact that it is not there.	Worcestershire Parkway is currently being constructed and will open in 2019.
I think that the new Parkway station should be used a Park-and-Ride site for motorists wishing to reach the centre of Worcester, Malvern, Hereford, Kidderminster, Pershore and Evesham. I support ideas which will cause a modal transport shift from cars to trains to reduce pollution and congestion from cars in our city and towns.	Thank you for your support for the WRIS.

Comment	WCC Response
<p>better car park facilities at Worcester Shrub Hill station and more frequent services to Birmingham New Street via Bromsgrove. Even though it may be slightly outside the boundaries but the Stourbridge - Walsall line needs to be reactivated plus the Honeybourne - Stratford line needs to be reopened (services from Stratford to Worcester or Paddington restarted. We desperately need more services to Bristol and the south west from Worcester Shrub Hill and Foregate street. Don't build up hope on Worcestershire Parkway as that is going to be a huge White elephant as people like me who don't live in St Peters will never use it as it is inconveniently placed ie nowhere near Droitwich or Worcester city centre</p>	<p>The provision of additional car parking at stations across the County is one of the key priorities within the WRIS.</p> <p>The new Bromsgrove electrification timetable will provide additional frequency of service from 2018.</p> <p>Re-opening the Stourbridge – Walsall line is a concern for West Midlands Rail.</p> <p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p> <p>Thank you for your support for WRIS Conditional Outputs WAB1 / WAB2 – providing enhanced services from Worcestershire to the south-west.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>Increased prominence to station improvements at Wythall and increased services on the Birmingham to Stratford Line which will also assist with movements to the Eastern Gateway project in Redditch. This would alleviate the crush at Whitlocks End which is only going to get worse with the proposed developments in Dickens Heath. Currently traffic from as far as north Redditch is driving to Majors Green to utilise the increased services available from Whitlocks End Station, this causes issues with transport, parking availability and additional traffic on local minor roads. Improving Wythall station would help to alleviate this but co-operation should be sought from Warwickshire to enhance all the stations on this line up as in Earlswood, The Lakes, Wood End and to and including Danzey Green which would be extremely well placed to serve the Easter Gateway project in Redditch. Some of these stations would have a far easier option of upgrading car park facilities. Public transport should also then be linked to the chosen upgraded stations.</p>	<p>We recognise that Wythall Station is in need of enhancement, but its landlocked nature restricts enhancements to the fabric of the station only. We will be happy to explore opportunities to enhance services and facilities with Warwickshire County Council and West Midlands Rail.</p>
<p>How it will help housing development in the area</p>	<p>Housing development in Worcestershire is based along the key rail corridors. Enhancements to the train services and stations proposed through the WRIS will therefore better integrate the new developments with the national rail network and promote sustainable travel.</p>



Comment	WCC Response
<p>Railfreight and intermodal depots around Worcester or Droitwich to enable quick and sustainable economic growth, Stourbridge - Walsall line reopening, Stratford upon Avon - Honeybourne line reopening, finishing off the Cotswold line redoubling, improved services to Cheltenham and the south west from Worcester Shrub Hill and Foregate Street ie hourly. Improve facilities at Worcester Shrub Hill ie car parking, lifts toilets and disabled access, redoubling of the Droitwich - stoke works line. Reopen station at Fernhill Heath and St Johns areas.</p>	<p>We support the use of rail to transport freight but there is not currently a critical mass of freight distribution in and around Worcester / Droitwich Spa to warrant the creation of a rail freight terminal. Instead we will continue to support enhancement of existing routes that carry freight – such as the Bristol – Birmingham line that passes through the County.</p> <p>Re-opening the Stourbridge – Walsall line is a concern for West Midlands Rail.</p> <p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire’s Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County’s rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS’s position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF’s objectives.</p> <p>Thank you for your support for WRIS Conditional Outputs WAB1 / WAB2 – providing enhanced services from Worcestershire to the south-west.</p> <p>We have considered Fernhill Heath station and for a variety of reasons, including insufficient capacity within the timetable and restricted access, this is not a viable scheme.</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>Support for the re instatement of the railway line from Broadway to Stratford upon Avon is one essential aspect of the development. It is vital that an alternative to the line through Bromsgrove is made available in order to minimise the increase in traffic generated by the developments.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>
<p>If the draft Rail Investment Strategy document had been written in PLAIN ENGLISH, rather than 'Managementspeak' it would have more impact. e.g. The use of 'evidence' as a verb is archaic, and 'baseline' as a verb is unknown in the OED. Does no-one proof-read these documents?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
<p>Await the Economic Impact Study with regards the above</p>	<p>No comment necessary.</p>
<p>Use of the Cotswold line to better connect Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and Warwickshire</p>	<p>The recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force will consider how the NCL can be best enhanced to serve these counties.</p>
<p>Anything to improve the transport infrastructure should be given priority.</p>	<p>Noted, thank you.</p>
<p>a comprehensive communications strategy is needed to run alongside the WRIS</p>	<p>Noted and agreed</p>

Comment	WCC Response
<p>I think it should be taken into consideration that only the proposed Bromsgrove route capitalises on the investment in new stations at Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway; failure to connect these stations would cause under-utilisation of these stations due to lack of a coherent service strategy. Hence, an increased sunk cost is risked.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments, these are noted.</p>
<p>A direct service to Cardiff and South Wales would be useful.</p>	<p>WRIS Conditional Outputs WAB1 / WAB2 seek to provide enhanced connectivity to the south-west and, via interchange at Bristol Parkway, to Cardiff and South Wales.</p>

## Written Responses

- 6.10** The comments received via written communication (email or letter) have been broken down into stakeholder responses and public responses. Both sets of responses have been responded to by WCC Officers.
- 6.11** In total, 43 pieces of written correspondence were submitted by a wide range of Stakeholders. The Stakeholders were made up from many different groups including District Councils, Town and Parish Councils, Industry organisations, user groups, statutory organisations and interest groups. These can be viewed in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4: Stakeholder Comments**

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response	Other Issues That Ought To Be Covered In The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
West Midlands Safari Park (WMSP)	Does not take into account the tourism needs of Kidderminster or the station.	We recognise the important role that tourism plays for Kidderminster's economy, particularly from visitors to the WMSP and the Severn Valley Railway (SVR). We can expand Stage 1 of the WRIS to emphasise this value and then again in terms of Conditional Output NCL2 and the proposal for 1tph services between Kidderminster - Worcester - London Paddington.	Tourism Hub for Kidderminster to support the 8 attractions in the area and the largest day visitor attraction in Worcestershire. Connectivity with Severn Valley Railway as proposed by Abellio to bring trains to a halt at West Midland Safari Park as well as a car park and access for local residents.	A scheme is also currently being developed by Worcestershire County Council to transform Kidderminster Station into a modern gateway to the town. This will help to encourage new and existing passengers to travel by train in order to reach the WMSP and SVR etc.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Worcestershire County Council (non transport)	Network to the new rail at Norton need to be dual line The opening of halts in the expanding village of Fernhill Heath	<p>We are exploring how best to provide enhanced frequency of train services along the North Cotswold Line. This will include considerations for double-tracking parts of the route if required to achieve this objective.</p> <p>The case for a new station at Fernhill Heath is limited due to access issues, its proximity to Worcester Shrub Hill and Droitwich Spa stations and the more cost-effective option to improve access at Droitwich Spa station (less than 5 miles to the north). Thus it does not form one of the County's priorities in the WRIS.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Warwickshire County Council	Warwickshire County Council supports the development of the rail strategy. We strongly support the development of a station car parking strategy and would be in favour of increased parking at Honeybourne Station given the unprecedented level of development that will take place in that area over the plan period. We are also supportive of the Cotswold Line task Force that has been established and welcome the long term aspiration for partial or full redoubling of the line to facilitate a 2 train per hour service to London. The County Council welcomes the clear position on the reopening of the Stratford - Honeybourne line on page 87 and would support this being included in the final Rail Investment Strategy.	Thank you for your comments, which are noted, and for your support of the aims and objectives within the WRIS.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Gloucestershire County Council	Gloucestershire County Council welcomes the production of this strategy as a means of providing a sound evidence base to make the economic case for better connectivity on the rail network. Three of the conditional outputs, relating to the North Cotswold line and the Kidderminster to Bristol corridor are important routes for residents, businesses and visitors to/from Gloucestershire. Similarly, a number of the aspirational infrastructure schemes will offer cross boundary benefits throughout the region.	Thank you for your comments, which are noted, and for your support of the aims and objectives within the WRIS.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Berrow Parish Council	Being in a rural location with little access to public transport, any improvement to any transport is welcomed.	Thank you for your comments, which are noted, and for your support of the aims and objectives within the WRIS.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Transport for the West Midlands	<p>The comments in this response represent the views of Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) - the transport arm of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).</p> <p>As adjacent local transport authorities we particularly welcome the opportunity to respond to your consultation given the strategic importance of this document. It will play a key role in supporting future growth in the West Midlands and creating the right environment to attract and retain investment through the delivery of excellent rail connectivity.</p> <p>There are strong regional ties between our areas with significant demand to transport people and goods across our borders from resident and non-resident citizens and businesses alike. It is important for TfWM to collaborate with neighbouring local transport authorities to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and high quality transport links are in place to support these movements. As such we believe that it is important to work together to ensure that transport planning is well aligned.</p> <p>We are supportive of Worcestershire County Council's overall aspirations to improve Worcestershire's rail connectivity as expressed in the draft Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (RIS).</p> <p>We are pleased that the implementation of the RIS would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Enhance connectivity between the West Midlands metropolitan area and Worcestershire;</li> <li>· Enhance Worcestershire's wider connectivity; and</li> <li>· Maintain the wider connectivity that the West Midlands metropolitan area benefits from.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We would be happy to engage with TfWM regarding exploring the potential to extend services under Conditional Output NCL2 to Stourbridge Junction and also in the development of the new West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy.</p> <p>The draft WRIS was written prior to the Secretary of State's announcement in July 2017 regarding the future of electrification schemes within the UK and as such we will need to reflect on its implications on aspirational enhancements such as electrification of the Bristol to Birmingham line. This will need to include considerations of bi-mode trains as suggested.</p> <p>Similarly, the WRIS was drafted prior to the publication of the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan and we will ensure that the final version of the WRIS is updated to reflect the new "Movement for Growth" publication.</p> <p>We will continue to work with partners in the West Midlands region to make a compelling and evidenced case for 3rd party investment within the rail network.</p>

	<p>In particular, given the potential benefits to the West Midlands metropolitan area, we welcome proposals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Additional calls at Worcestershire Parkway for Cross Country Bristol/Manchester and Plymouth/Newcastle services;</li> <li>· Improved car park capacity at Worcestershire stations; and</li> <li>· Rail capacity upgrades in the Worcester area.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, we note that in developing options for conditional output NCL 2 (provision of 1tph between Kidderminster and London Paddington) Worcestershire County Council have considered a variant option which would extend the service from Kidderminster to Stourbridge Junction. TfWM would be keen to be engaged further as proposals for this conditional output develop given the potential benefit that this could provide to our metropolitan area.</p> <p>We note that electrification of the Bristol to Birmingham line is a key aspirational enhancement in the RIS. Subsequent to the publication of the draft RIS, the Secretary of State for Transport has effectively cancelled all outstanding rail electrification. Worcestershire County Council will have to consider this as the RIS is refined. We encourage Worcestershire County Council to consider whether the outcomes that were expected from electrification could be delivered using an alternative solution such as the roll out of bi-mode trains. Bi-mode trains may offer some of the train acceleration advantages of fully electric trains.</p> <p>Availability of funding is a key constraint on rail enhancements. The recent publication of the High Level Output Specification and initial Statement of Funds Available for 2019-24 railway operation, maintenance, renewals and enhancements further emphasises this.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	
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	<p>We encourage Worcestershire County Council to continue to engage and make the most of the opportunities to secure investment through the collective work of our key strategic partnerships of West Midlands Rail and Midlands Connect. Partners must work together to make a compelling and coherent case for investment based on a clear prioritisation of Conditional Outputs that balances the interests of all across the area. We encourage Worcestershire County Council to continue to make the case for the wider importance of the local priorities in the Worcestershire RIS to inform this process. In particular, we encourage Worcestershire County Council to work with other West Midlands Rail partners in developing the new West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy.</p> <p>Transport for West Midlands – Movement for Growth</p> <p>In the Worcestershire RIS, Worcestershire County Council has referenced the West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2011-2026.</p> <p>It should be noted that this is no longer the adopted transport plan for the West Midlands metropolitan area. In June 2016, WMCA approved the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, “Movement for Growth”. Which details the vision and approach for developing the transport system for the West Midlands Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>A 2026 Delivery Plan for Transport is currently being prepared in line with “Movement for Growth”. This sets out a high level programme of capital schemes to support delivery of the strategy for the Metropolitan Area.</p> <p>Details of both documents can be found on our can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://www.tfwm.org.uk/strategy/movement-for-growth/">https://www.tfwm.org.uk/strategy/movement-for-growth/</a></p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>Alex Greatholder</p> <p>Senior Policy Officer</p>	
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Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Stratford Rail Transport Group	<p>1. Stratford Rail Transport Group OBJECTS to the unduly negative, unjustified and premature dismissal of the SWO, Stratford-Honeybourne-Worcester/Oxford reopening proposal as detailed in 6.4 'Conclusions from Connectivity Tests' and 7.7 'Excluded Conditional Outputs,' of the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (RIS).</p> <p>2. The work Worcestershire County Council commissioned to lead to such conclusions has not been published nor has it been subject to any public scrutiny, unlike the Stratford-Honeybourne Rail Study, Arup, 2012, which has been subject of Examination at the Stratford Core Strategy Examinations in 2015 and 2016. There is therefore a need for transparency in the evidence base work that underlines the RIS.</p> <p>3. At an officer meeting on 17 May on the LTP4 rail work, evidence was presented that there was a business case for Stratford-Paddington via the Cotswold Line, but only south of the Racecourse and there was not sufficient housing to justify Stratford-Worcester</p> <p>4. SRTG have requested that the technical evidence base used in the preparation of the draft Worcestershire CC RIS be published on the Council's website. This would have allowed closer scrutiny of the methodology and examination by the public and other rail experts, during the consultation period, in the same way the Arup, Stratford Rail Study, 2012, was published and subject to scrutiny and testing at the Stratford Core Strategy Examination in 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>5. The projected growth on the SWO rail corridors to 2030/1 is in fact:-  Stratford-Evesham-Worcester rail corridor Total pop = 209,267  Stratford-Moreton-Oxford rail corridor Total pop = 289,132  Worcester-Evesham-Moreton-Oxford rail corridor Total pop = 411,388</p> <p>6. It is evident no in depth work has been carried to test the Stratford-Worcester, service detailed in the Arup report, for which there is evidence, whereas, the Circular Stratford-Evesham-Worcester-B'ham-Solihull-Stratford, Option 8 tested in the RIS was not part of the Arup business case.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>7. Worcestershire County Council is one of 11 funding partners who have provisionally agreed to commission an Economic Impact Study (EIS) on Stratford-Honeybourne-Worcester/Oxford reopening, to capture the economic benefits of this scheme.</p> <p>8. Until the proposed EIS is commissioned and the results are known, (together with a GRIP3 refresh), the publication of the unduly negative conclusions on SWO regarding GVA and job creation information is premature and prejudicial to reach any firm conclusions.</p> <p>9. The comments detailed in the RIS that “8 – The economic value of reopening the Honeybourne-Stratford upon Avon route is limited, suggesting this would not be a sufficient rationale alone for Worcestershire to progress the concept further,” are not accepted.</p> <p>10. Since the Arup study, 2012, a rail economist in 2015, carried out an update to the BCR to factor in increased passenger growth and Cala’s proposed £17m financial contribution from the Long Marston Airfield Garden Village development. This increased the best BCR from 2.03 to 3.34. This information was supplied to Worcestershire County Council in May 2017, but clearly was not considered in preparation of the RIS.</p> <p>11. Cala’s proposed £17m contribution to the Stratford-Honeybourne reinstatement, together with a further GRIP rail study is detailed in the Long Marston Garden Village Expression of Interest, July 2016, a public document, that again was not taken into account in the RIS evaluation.</p> <p>12. NCL1/NCL2 - The provision of additional double track sections of the North Cotswold Line are supported including additional services. However, reference should be made to the GWR ‘North Cotswold Line Vision,’ 2016, which includes SWO Stratford-Worcester/Oxford, as a second stage of the Vision.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The County recognises that Honeybourne Station could offer greater capacity to serve the neighbouring areas of both Worcestershire and Warwickshire, with the potential for facility and car parking enhancements that may be considered both by local authorities, the rail industry and developers.</p> <p>We will update the railway map in Fig 3.1 to include the Honeybourne - Stratford freight line to Long Marston and the planned extension of the GWSR through to Braodway. We will also review the Fig 3.10 to confirm the correct identification of signalling control for the NCL.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Other</p> <p>13. The longer term potential of Honeybourne – Cheltenham for the GWSR heritage railway has not been mentioned.</p> <p>14. Figure 3.1 Rail Map of Worcestershire, fails to show the 3 mile Honeybourne-Long Marston line, the only freight line in Worcestershire. Similarly the existing and potential heritage GWSR line from Cheltenham-Broadway-Honeybourne is not shown. Both routes are protected in the South Worcestershire Development Plan, 2016.</p> <p>15. Figure 3.10: Rail Infrastructure Constraints In Worcestershire, incorrectly shows the Cotswold Line east of Evesham, as “Dual track, digital signalling.” This section is operated from manually controlled signal boxes.</p> <p>16. CONCLUSION</p> <p>The RIS has displayed the very “lack of strategic thinking” through its premature dismissal of SWO, Stratford-Worcester/Oxford, that it suggests the rail industry has on p4. Worcestershire CC is therefore requested to reword its comments on SWO in the RIS particularly with the imminent commissioning of an EIS and proposed GRIP3 refresh and until a sound evidence base has been established.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Highways England	<p>Highways England welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS) which sets out the Council's economic case for enhanced rail connectivity across the County. It proposes four overarching outputs for rail service development which would deliver £50.42m GVA per annum, and 1,151 new jobs in the County. It is noted that the WRIS can be used to inform the development of Worcestershire's Local Transport Plan 4 (2017-2030).</p> <p>Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is the role of Highways England to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the SRN whilst acting as a delivery partner to national economic growth. In relation to the WRIS, Highways England's principal interest is safeguarding the operation of the M5, M50, M40 and M42.</p> <p>It is stated that rail connectivity from Worcestershire to London is slow and of limited frequency. Therefore many Worcestershire passengers use the M5, M42 and M40 to access more efficient and frequent services from Birmingham International and Warwick Parkway. The Worcestershire Parkway station which is planned to open in 2019 will help to improve connectivity from Worcestershire and will reduce the number of vehicle users using strategic highway routes to access Birmingham International or Warwick Parkway. It is noted that the Strategy seeks to build on this through the following proposals:</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and observations. We acknowledge the proximity of Worcestershire Parkway to Junction 7 of the M5 and we are happy to continue to work with Highways England to ensure that the Strategic Road Network in and around the new station is carefully managed. We are also aware of the fact that the HS2 scheme will have an impact on rail and road trips and we again look forward to working together to assess and manage the implications of this major new rail scheme.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· 2 trains per hour Worcester – Oxford – Paddington</li> <li>· 1 train per hour Kidderminster – Droitwich Spa – Worcester – Paddington</li> <li>· Calls at Worcestershire Parkway in Bristol – Manchester and Plymouth – Newcastle services</li> <li>· Regional service between Kidderminster/Bromsgrove, Worcester and Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester and Bristol</li> </ul> <p>Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ</p> <p>Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Various improvements to infrastructure including station upgrades at Worcester Shrub Hill, capacity upgrades and electrification of both the Bristol to Birmingham and Snow Hill lines.</li> </ul> <p>Highways England has no specific comments to provide in relation to these proposals but considers that they will help to increase sustainable travel choices for Worcestershire residents and will provide transport capacity enhancements which will help to support planned growth across the region. This in turn should have related benefits for the SRN in the area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Improved rail connectivity across Worcestershire will reduce the number of rail passengers using strategic routes to access stations at Birmingham International and Warwick Parkway</li> <li>· Increased services from Worcestershire will lead to rail travel being a more favourable transport mode which in turn will help to reduce the demand on the SRN.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>However whilst the opening of Worcestershire Parkway will help to reduce vehicular trips to Birmingham International and Warwick Parkway, its position in close proximity to M5 junction 7 could lead to pressures at this junction at peak times, especially if connectivity is enhanced from this station under the WRIS proposals. Highways England expects that the proposals' impacts on passenger numbers and potential impacts on the surrounding highway network would be appropriately assessed.</p> <p>Furthermore Highways England notes that some of the impacts from HS2 Phase One have also been considered. It is acknowledged that there may be many passengers seeking to access the Birmingham Interchange station at Curzon Street (note later amended to Bickenhill, nr Solihull) from Worcestershire via the M5 and M42, which may offset benefits from the development of the Worcestershire Parkway station in terms of traffic impacts on the motorway network.</p> <p>However it is stated in the WRIS that there is a desire to improve direct connectivity to key UK economies and to HS2 at Birmingham from Worcestershire. The presence of these connections would help to reduce the need to travel by car on the SRN to Birmingham and this would be welcomed by Highways England. It is also stated in the WRIS that HS2 will help to release substantial capacity on rail routes across the country, including across Worcestershire, which provides an opportunity for enhancing regional networks and supporting the WRIS strategy.</p> <p>Highways England has no further comments to provide and trusts the above is useful in the progression of the WRIS.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Chris Bate</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Thank you for the recent consultation relating to 'Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy - Supporting Development of Worcestershire's Local Transport Plan 4'. Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) have reviewed the document in relation to air quality. WRS are in support of public transport improvements which would aid modal shift from car dependency and offer a positive impact on air quality. WRS recommend that any new car parking provisions, new railway stations or transport links should compliment emerging or future national and local plans to tackle poor air quality (lowering emission strategy, air quality action plans, etc.).	Thank you for your comments. We aim to complement existing and emerging plans to tackle poor air quality in the development and delivery of our new rail schemes. We recognise the importance role that rail has to play in reducing airborne pollutants by removing car-based trips from the road network. We will increase the emphasis of this fact within the final version of the WRIS.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Hagley Parish Council	We particularly welcome the proposal to provide more station parking. However in the case of Hagley Station (in our parish), there is nowhere to put any. Parking at Kidderminster Station is also constrained, but there is an opportunity for this at Blakedown where there is a substantial area near to the station that could be utilised for parking.	Thank you for your comments. We are actively exploring the provision of new station car parking in the north of the County, recognising that some stations (such as Hagley) are unable to accept additional provision of spaces.



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Alvechurch Parish Council	<p>The Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the County Council's Rail Investment strategy, as it did previously for the Local Transport Plan LTP4. Alvechurch occupies a key location in north-east Worcestershire and at the boundary with Birmingham city. Future anticipated growth will come from some of the 2000 new houses to be built under the Bromsgrove District plan and a portion of the 38000 Birmingham overspill housing that will go to the adjacent local council areas like Bromsgrove. This will inevitably place very significant demands on Alvechurch Parish and its infrastructure, including the rail network. It is vital that rail planning goes along in tandem with actual decisions on housing allocations such that a cross-strategy review will be very necessary at the medium term planning/investment date of 2023 (coinciding with completion of the Bromsgrove District examination of Green Belt boundaries and potential land release for new building).</p> <p>Alvechurch Parish Council has had a close interest in rail matters since the plan was announced around 5 years ago to make track and station enhancements to the Redditch to Longbridge section of the Cross City line. This equips us to provide a commentary on rail use as it is now and might develop on one of the key travel corridors between Birmingham and Redditch.</p> <p>Our comments follow under key headings:</p> <p>1. CONTEXT....Alvechurch Parish is criss-crossed by the cross-City rail line from Redditch to Lichfield (known as the Redditch Branch in the rail industry) as well as the M42 and A441 Birmingham - Redditch main road. The Parish's proximity to the West Midlands conurbation (and the emerging WM Combined Authority / Midlands engine project with which Redditch Council is associated) means that transport issues already play a significant and increasing role in Parish life. We can see the importance of integrated planning between road, rail and related public transport developments at the parish-wide level and within Alvechurch village as a potential transport hub. We are not convinced that this perspective is fully brought together in the County's LTP work.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The WRIS considers both medium and long-term plans for growth in line with the Network Rail's Long Term Planning Process (LTPP). This ensures that our proposals have credibility with the rail industry both in terms of forward planning and the underlying economic justifications for intervention. Notwithstanding this, we have also considered the impact of local Development Plans as part of the WRIS to ensure that the Conditional Outputs best serve the current and future passenger demands in the County. This information is contained within Stage 2 of the WRIS - "Review of Worcestershire's Development Proposals".</p> <p>We are planning further work to investigate options to provide car parking at stations across the County, including Alvechurch, in order to address the expected growth in demand for access to rail over the next 10 - 20 years.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>2. AN EMERGING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN....The significance of infrastructure and especially rail issues to the local community is reflected in a dedicated Transport policy section in our near-complete parish Neighbourhood Plan, targeted for a community referendum and adoption in 2018. The Neighbourhood Plan draws on evidence from strategic infrastructure plans like LTP4, identifies current and predicted problems and defines a number of policies. The Parish Council feels Alvechurch residents should be able to see that transport planning strategies are well integrated across all levels of local Councils and reflect what a majority of local people want. The relevant policies and supporting evidence from our emerging Neighbourhood Plan can be shared with relevant WCC officers.</p> <p>3. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER STRATEGIC PLANS.... District and County strategic plans point to significant future growth, both economic and housing-related. In north-east Worcestershire the Bromsgrove and Redditch Local Plans both acknowledge this with some projections to 2030. LTP4 attempts to build a regional infrastructure strategy though the principal authorities in north-east Worcestershire (as well as our Parish Council) have questioned how well it reflects the Birmingham influence.</p> <p>The Parish Council's concerns over the integration of strategic plans extend to the Rail Investment Strategy where an end point of 2043 differs significantly from the 2030 targets in local Development Plans. The Rail strategy does not appear to explain why this is. Moreover as we mention above 2023 is the timely point for major review of housing and economic developments in our part of the county in relation to the Midlands engine project, so to ensure the right alignment for in particular the rail corridor that includes Alvechurch station, its car park and bus service integration with that found in Redditch and Barnt Green</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>4. RAIL USAGE PROJECTIONS AND HOUSING GROWTH FIGURES... this is the key concern for Alvechurch Parish Council. Bromsgrove' Council's recently-adopted Local Plan contains no specific housing targets for the District's larger settlements like Alvechurch. This point is compounded by a larger uncertainty over the future "overspill" requirements from Birmingham city in the years to 2030. Despite these uncertainties, it is almost inevitable that Alvechurch will increase in size and that there will be significant and desirable pressure for many local people to commute towards Birmingham (and Redditch) by train- the so called modal shift from motor vehicles. Future rail usage projections need very careful thought and a clear link to Government housing requirements and local targets. Recent Government guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework shows that development around rail hubs will be favoured ...a point not obviously addressed in the Rail Investment Strategy but which could have significant implications for our Parish. We include here the current availability of station car parking, the scope for increased parking spaces, the connection with bus services that could link better with the several stations on this rail corridor and the traffic approaches to our station which will need review, and alignment with any future remodelling of the Alvechurch Village centre roads and pavements that may go forward.</p> <p>5. EXISTING RAIL USAGE FIGURES FOR ALVECHURCH....moving on to specifics, the Rail Investment Strategy identifies current rail usage figures from Alvechurch. The Parish Council questions the accuracy of the data. If based on ticket sales at the station, they are likely to be significantly underestimating local demand, as the ticket machine has never functioned properly since installation at the time of the station upgrade work. Local knowledge suggests it operates correctly about 50% of the time and there are persisting machine faults known to the train operating company. The Parish Council is concerned that future projections may be underestimating local demand with implications for assessment of car park capacity and other desirable station enhancements.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>6. ALVECHURCH STATION CAR PARK....the Parish Council notes several references to the car park in the Rail Investment Strategy. There is a history here, in that a larger and fully-provisioned parking facility was planned and costed in the original Redditch Branch rail enhancement project in 2014. This was a condition of the original General Consent Order which authorised the project to increase rail capacity on the cross-City line and enhance station facilities. Although the station itself was enhanced, Network Rail failed to deliver the improved car park as planned and the current parking area is still subject to regular flooding, is unlit and has no facilities for those with disabilities. The flooding issue is longstanding and causes significant frustration to local people.</p> <p>The capacity of the existing car park is around 50, not 70 as stated in the Rail Investment Strategy. Even this figure (published on the London Midland web site) is optimistic when sections of the parking area are flooded. The notional 50-capacity figure may be reduced further by the recent decision to put yellow lines on the access road. Given the County Council policy of supporting public transport and encouraging a modal shift from private car to rail or bus, car park capacity (including a bus parking place) is a key issue, now and in the future.</p> <p>7. In summary, the Parish Council values the opportunity to comment but asserts that transport strategies need careful alignment with business and housing strategies, especially in an area like north-east Worcestershire, where significant growth is expected over the next 5-10 years.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Charter Business Forms LTd	<p>We think the proposal for more trains to be available via Bromsgrove to various parts of the Country is a superb idea. We have long been the forgotten town with poor transport services.</p> <p>We are now in the 21st century at last and need all the available transport on the trains that is available to everybody else. With all the new housing development going on in Bromsgrove and surrounding areas, it is very important that we have a good Network Rail system. Please continue to pursue this as hard as possible and let's have the availability to travel anywhere from our local stations.</p>	Thank you for your comments, which are noted, and for your support of the aims and objectives within the WRIS.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Railfuture	<p>Response of the West Midlands Branch of RailFuture to the Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy August 2017</p> <p>The West Midlands Branch of Railfuture which is an independent non-political national organisation campaigning for better passenger and freight rail network. The Branch is providing a response to the above-named document.</p> <p>We welcome the County Councils emphasis on enhancing rail travel to help a modal shift from car usage. Below you will see we support almost all the proposed strategies and our comments are constructive.</p> <p>However, with the current fragility of rail services in the Worcester area we believe that the Council's top priority should be the modernisation of signalling in the Worcester area and the remodelling of the track in the Worcester Triangle between Foregate, Shrub Hill (Rainbow Hill Junction). These will provide a more robust service and operational flexibility.</p> <p>1. Two trains per hour from Worcester to London Paddington.</p> <p>We are fully supportive of the proposal that there should be two trains per hour from Worcester to London Paddington. This has clearly been demonstrated in tables 3.11 and 3.12 whereby York has 4 trains per hour to London and Worcester only 1 train per hour.</p> <p>We also agree that the second train should not be routed via Cheltenham but serve the North Cotswold line instead. So, we do not accept the Route Study recommendations.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. The WRIS advocates for re-signalling and track capacity improvements in the Worcester area - see page 86 of the WRIS for further details.</p> <p>Conditional output WAB4 would provide a new Bromsgrove - Worcester - Cheltenham Spa - Bristol service to address existing issues regarding connectivity to the south-west. The recent Secretary of State announcement in July 2017 regarding the future of electrification schemes in the UK means that we will review the WRIS to ensure it aligns with the latest industry thinking. Alternative solutions to electrification may need to be found.</p> <p>Thank you for supporting the Shrub Hill Masterplan. We are actively investigating options to improve access to rail for residents living to the west of Worcester - including the potential for a new station.</p> <p>Page 86 of the WRIS details our desire for signalling and capacity enhancements in the Worcester area to address existing infrastructure constraints. In addition, we are considering options for additional car parking at a variety of stations in order to address current capacity issues.</p> <p>Smethwick Galton Bridge is outside of the Worcestershire boundary and improvements need to be championed by West Midlands Rail.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>2. Calls at Worcestershire Parkway by Cross Country Services</p> <p>We support the stopping of Cross Country Services at Worcestershire Parkway as outlined in the conditional outputs. However, there is no provision for direct travel from Bromsgrove to the SouthWest necessitating at best a 28minute journey to New Street once an hour to then return through Bromsgrove Station to go south. The new electric Cross City service in 2018 will be a stopping service taking longer so we propose trains from Birmingham New Street should serve Barnt Green, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham Spa and Bristol Temple Meads not only giving better connections South-West from Redditch and Bromsgrove but also with the North Cotswold line at Worcestershire Parkway. We have made this proposal as part of our input into the DfT consultation on the next Cross-Country Franchise.</p> <p>However, it is noted that that the provision of these services in the Strategy is dependent on, amongst others, conditional outputs of electrification of the line from Birmingham to Bristol. It is stated that these services could start in Control Period 6 but the document then states electrification may be completed “at a later date” Control period 7. We believe these services should be part of the next Cross-Country Franchise minimum level of service in the ITT not delayed until electrification.</p> <p>3. Regional service between Kidderminster, Worcester, Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester and Bristol.</p> <p>We support the provision of this new service indicated in table 7.7 from Birmingham. However as stated in paragraph 2 above the introduction of this service should not be dependent on electrification. We also recognise the need for passengers to be able to travel along the Midland Connect Corridors to the South West and previously advocated in our response to the franchise consultation (due to be awarded shortly) one train per hour to achieve single connection journeys to Swindon, Reading, Bristol and the South West.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The case for a new station at Fernhill Heath is limited due to access and timetabling issues, its proximity to Worcester Shrub Hill and Droitwich Spa stations and the more cost-effective option to improve access at other existing stations (including Droitwich Spa - less than 5 miles to the north). Thus it does not form one of the County’s priorities in the WRIS.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>4. Improvements to Worcester stations.</p> <p>We welcome improvements to Worcester Shrub Hill as identified in paragraphs 5.16, 7.6 and 8.1 of the WRIS. We note that a Shrub Hill Master Plan is currently being prepared in consultation with Worcester City Council with a view to not only improving facilities at Shrub Hill station including improved access, particularly for those with a disability and car parking but regeneration of the area.</p> <p>We are concerned that in paragraph 3.57 mention is made of the difficulty for passengers to cross the Severn from the west side to reach the stations in the City. Moreover, reference is made that much of the new housing development planned in Worcester is projected to be built on the West side of the Severn but we cannot find any reference to how the RIS will alleviate this access problem indeed the ITTS for both the services to Birmingham and the Cotswold Line show them starting from Worcester not Malvern.</p> <p>5. Infrastructure</p> <p>We support elimination of infrastructure constraints to enable improved services as identified in paragraph 5.10.3 of the Strategy. The document rightly states in 3.5.2 the headway (spacing of trains) is not up to the modern capacity causing constraints on the network. We are of the view that the main priorities are infrastructure and signalling improvements in the Worcester City area, Droitwich and Malvern Wells. These improvements require urgent attention as they are causing operational difficulties and the equipment is continuing to fail despite Network Rail attempting to extend its life and should be an immediate priority for the RIS.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>6. Existing Stourbridge Line pattern of services</p> <p>We support the Rowley Regis turnback facility which should significantly improve peak time commuting. It is noted in 5.6 reference to an indicative timetable by CENTRO and the pattern of train services shown in figure 5.12. There should not be a reduction in the current service pattern from Kidderminster or Stourbridge Junction. The current success of the turn up and go service which should not be reversed. We note the WRIS gives the opportunity to improve services at the south end of the line which we support.</p> <p>There should also be a more predictable pattern of services into Worcester Stations, ideally with two trains per hour to Worcester Foregate Street and a clock face service pattern from both Foregate Street and Shrub Hill stations.</p> <p>7. Increased parking at stations.</p> <p>Railfuture welcomes the need to increased car parking at stations. However, consideration should be given to make Hartlebury a Park and Ride facility as this is the most convenient station for Stourport and Bewdley. It would also like to see better provision for parking at Worcester Shrub Hill which the Master Plan should address.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>8. Other considerations</p> <p>The Branch wishes to raise the following additional matters which are not specifically referred to in the WRIS.</p> <p>8.1 The importance of single change journeys to Birmingham Airport and the desire to improve connections at Smethwick Galton Bridge together with improvements to the existing station. At present, there is only one train per hour from Smethwick Galton Bridge to Birmingham International</p> <p>8.2 The provision of earlier trains on Sundays from Worcestershire stations. We consider this essential to enable passengers to travel to work on a Sunday particularly if they are employed in retail or leisure and earlier connections at Birmingham stations. This should be pursued with the new operator of the West Midlands Franchise and Transport for the West Midlands. This has long been an aspiration of the Branch.</p> <p>8.3 Reference is made in the Local Transport Plan to the opening of a station at Fernhill Heath between Droitwich Spa and Worcester. However, this is omitted from the Draft WRIS. Clarification is needed to this discrepancy and whether a station is to be provided west of Worcester instead.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Cotswold Line Promotion Group	<p>CLPG applauds the initiative of the County in undertaking a long term examination of the opportunities for development of the rail network in the County, and we welcome the opportunity to comment on the draft. It is not really an investment strategy, since there is no investment funding included, and little about the funding sources that will be explored. However, that does not invalidate the value of the document, for which the sub title of “Evidenced Rail Vision” might be more appropriate.</p> <p>We make three general comments to begin:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inwards Travel. The document, like the draft LTP, appears to be focussed on outward travel requirements from the County. We would like to see equal emphasis on the importance of inward travel, particularly to the city of Worcester as a destination for many purposes, business, work, education, shopping, leisure and tourism. Current service provision is not always focussed on the inward travel needs, and this needs to be addressed with train operators.</li> <li>2. We would like to see more emphasis and greater urgency on addressing the inadequacy of the existing infrastructure in the Worcester area. This inadequacy, in layout, capacity and reliability, has a serious adverse impact on the performance of existing services, and puts severe constraints on service improvements. In our view it is the most important issue to address, should be given greater prominence in the document, and greater urgency to progress its replacement and enhancement. To illustrate this apparent lack of emphasis. Section 3.5.2 on page 23 only has Worcester as the third bullet point, and makes no reference to unreliability of the existing infrastructure.</li> <li>3. There are a number of inconsistencies between this draft and the draft LTP4, on which we previously commented. There is no reference to the LTP suggestion of new stations in north and west Worcester. This seems illogical in a document that has a longer timescale than the LTP. There is also no mention of improvements in access to rail stations, by walking, cycling and bus/taxi, nor of improvements in accessibility at the County’s rail stations. The Strategy appears to be entirely car oriented.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>All of the Conditional Outputs proposed will have reciprocal benefits for inbound travel to Worcestershire stations and we will clarify this in the post-consultation WRIS.</p> <p>Page 86 of the WRIS details our clear and explicit ambition for enhancements to track and signalling infrastructure in the Worcester area.</p> <p>We have looked at options for new stations to the north and west of Worcester and consider that enhancing access to the west of the City is the best option.</p> <p>The WRIS aims to enhance specific areas of the LTP4 rather than repeating existing policy on sustainable travel - both policy documents will need to be delivered in parallel with each other.</p> <p>The benefits of the extension of 1 train per hour to Kidderminster are not double counted on top of those for Worcester to Paddington. In the case of a Kidderminster to Paddington service they assume one of 2 trains per hour between Paddington and Worcester is extended to Kidderminster, and do not assume a third train.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Turning to specific points:-</p> <p>1. Page 5. Evidenced Proposals. It appears to us that there may be double counting in the benefits of the 2 trains per hour Worcester – Paddington and the 1 train per hour from Kidderminster. The two values suggest that a third train is implied.</p> <p>2. Worcester to Stratford. We are deeply disappointed with the apparent dismissal of the value of reinstatement of the former line between Stratford and Honeybourne, which has been supported by the County in the previous and current LTPs, and by numerous letters from the County. We do not accept the validity of the analysis that has been undertaken on its value, which may be due to a shortcoming of the SYSTRA model in dealing with a new piece of connecting infrastructure, and may understate the added value of an additional frequency between Honeybourne, Evesham, Pershore and Worcester and beyond. The final bullet point in 3.5.5 on page 28 highlights the poor connectivity for the east Worcestershire stations to Birmingham.</p> <p>3. Table 3.2. There appears to be an inconsistency in the stated relationship between annual usage, daily return passengers, and passengers per car park space. It suggests to us that the daily return passengers are only outward travellers, whereas the annual usage covers outward and inward journeys. We cannot see how usage relates to car park capacity, or what this says about demand for car parking.</p> <p>4. Car Parking. We fully support the emphasis in the document on the need for substantially greater car parking capacity at all of the County's stations. The provision of Worcestershire Parkway does not overcome the overall inadequate capacity, and may encourage more rail heading from other stations in the County. Improvement of capacity is urgent at all stations. We suggested in the response to LTP4 that a similar funding arrangement to that for Parkway car parking could be applied at other stations.</p> <p>5. Norton Junction. The document makes a number of references to the need to enhance Abbotswood Junction, but ignores the inadequacy of Norton Junction, not least the severe speed restriction from the single Cotswold line towards Worcester.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>2. The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>6. Henwick Turnback. Item 3.6.4 refers to this scheme. In our view, this is an urgent priority for the introduction of the IET services on the Cotswold line. It will also improve connectivity between Shrub Hill and Foregate Street stations, particularly in times of disruption, and the document should be stressing the value of this facility.</p> <p>7. Refranchising. The final version of the document will need to be updated. Delay to the West Midlands franchise has already occurred, and it seems probable that both Great Western and Cross Country will also be delayed.</p> <p>8. Local Plans. Housing developments in south Warwickshire will have an impact on demand for rail at Honeybourne station, and additional car parking capacity is urgently needed at Honeybourne.</p> <p>9. South Worcestershire Development Plan. The references in this section to development would appear to contradict the negative conclusion of the value of reopening the line between Honeybourne and Stratford, with its facility for enhancing access to employment centres in Birmingham and the Solihull area.</p> <p>10. 5.10.3. Common Infrastructure Gaps. This section is crucial, as stated above. It needs to emphasise the unreliability of the present infrastructure, and the reduced capability to maintain the signalling and interlocking.</p> <p>We consider that there is a case for provision of a north facing bay platform at Shrub Hill, as well as a passenger train crossover at Wylds Lane, east of Shrub Hill.</p> <p>Need to include reference to enhancement of Norton Junction as well as Abbotswood.</p> <p>11. Table 6.1. For reasons stated above, we do not consider that Option 8 has been properly valued, and wish to see this reviewed.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>3. Annual passenger numbers are counted as entries and exits, whereas passengers per parking space are counted as single passengers per day.</p> <p>5. The North Cotswold Line Task Force will consider all potential constraints along the line including at Norton Junction.</p> <p>6. The Henwick turnback is currently being delivered by Network Rail.</p> <p>7. The final version of the WRIS will be updated to account for any franchising or other delays.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>12. Table 6.2. We cannot see why Options 1, 2, 4 and 5 are assessed without Parkway, since the station will be operational well before they are developed.</p> <p>We would suggest that the values of Options 4 and 5 should be assessed for 1 tph as well as the present 2tph to establish that there is significant added value in the greater frequency.</p> <p>13. 6.4. The statement in bullet point Eight is unnecessarily negative, as there is no question of Worcestershire progressing the concept alone.</p> <p>14. 7.4. We agree that the present north-south Cross Country service is of no value to Worcestershire (or indeed for connectivity between Worcestershire and Gloucestershire). It is our view that there is a case for a new service pattern, probably as part of the next Cross Country franchise specification, for a new Birmingham to Bristol service, calling at ?University, Bromsgrove, Parkway, Ashchurch , Cheltenham, ?Gloucester, Bristol Parkway, ?Filton and Bristol Temple Meads. We suggest that the County commissions, possibly in partnership with Gloucestershire, an evaluation of this. Regarding the options of Kidderminster or Bromsgrove to the south, we would prefer to see an option of an hourly service for each. This would be a great enhancement in connectivity for Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Droitwich and Worcester City.</p> <p>15. 7.6. It needs to be borne in mind that redoubling of the Cotswold line will also need upgrading of the signalling to provide shorter headways between trains.</p> <p>We would suggest that capacity increases for the Worcester area and Droitwich to Stoke Works redoubling should be separated. The case for each is different, and they are not necessarily mutually dependent.</p> <p>Regeneration of Shrub Hill is strongly supported.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>16. 7.7. The rejection of Honeybourne to Stratford reopening is unacceptable, and contrary to current County policy and statements. The alleged complexities of the reopening have been addressed by the Arup study in 2012, and we consider that the assessment of benefit to the County has been grossly understated. CLPG will strongly and publicly oppose this conclusion.</p> <p>Redditch branch. While we understand the non - feasibility of direct connection between the branch and the south, the document should address the issue of improving interchange at Barnt Green, possibly with an island platform remodelling.</p> <p>In conclusion, we welcome and support the general thrust of the draft document, but consider that there are some substantial changes to improve it and alter the flawed analysis in some parts. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns further with the County.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Wyre Forest District Council	<p>The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS) is an ambitious strategy that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) has prepared to evidence its economic case – in terms of GVA and jobs – for enhanced County rail connectivity. The strategy proposes 4 overarching Conditional Outputs for rail service development which would deliver £50.42m GVA per annum and 1,151 new jobs in the County:• 2 Trains per Hour Worcester-Oxford-Paddington - £21.22m GVA p.a. and 475 new jobs;• 1 Train per Hour Kidderminster-Droitwich Spa-Worcester-Paddington - £13.8m GVA p.a. and 273 new jobs;• Calls at Worcestershire Parkway in Bristol-Manchester and Plymouth-Newcastle Services - £9.6m GVA p.a. and 250 new jobs;• Regional Service between Kidderminster/Bromsgrove, Worcester and Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester and Bristol - £5.73m GVA p.a. and 153 new jobs. Comment: Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) supports the principle of this ambitious strategy and recognises the benefits to the County as a whole. The provision of a better public transport system and the creation of new jobs is supported and encouraged by WFDC. By investing in our rail network we will help to sustain economic growth, increase connectivity and reduce the reliance on motor vehicles which will improve the environment and help to reduce the impact on climate change. The comments set out in this response will focus mainly on the parts of the proposed strategy that relate to Wyre Forest District.The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS) begins by outlining some of the key challenges that the County faces over the next decade or so. With the newly adopted Local Plans of South Worcestershire, Bromsgrove and Redditch allocated new housing sites to be delivered over their plan periods and the emerging Wyre Forest District Local Plan proposing to allocate further housing numbers, there is increasing pressure on the rail network. The WRIS states that the “County’s rail services will not match these ambitions without significant</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>We are conscious of the lack of car parking capacity at Kidderminster station and the issues of peak time road traffic congestion in and around the station. We are actively pursuing a review of the station parking provision in the north of the County in order to relieve pressure on existing stations where it would be difficult to provide additional capacity without negatively impacting on the local strategic road network. We look forward to working with you to develop these options further.</p> <p>We will also update the final version of the WRIS to include the commitments within the new West Midlands Rail franchise relevant to Wyre Forest.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>development and investment beyond that proposed by the rail industry.”Comment: Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) acknowledges this issue and supports the requirement for significant development and investment to improve the rail service for Worcestershire County.On page 4 of the WRIS it identifies one of the key challenges for Kidderminster as its “limited connectivity to London and southwards.”Comment: WFDC recognise this as an important challenge for the District. However, there are other challenges applicable to Wyre Forest District that are mentioned elsewhere in the strategy document that are also considered to be significant and worthy of investment to rectify and improve.The infrastructure to support Worcestershire’s Vision is set out on page 5 of the document and includes:• North Cotswold Line Capacity Upgrade;• Worcester Area and Droitwich Spa to Stoke Works Capacity Upgrade;• New Car Park Capacity and/or new stations;• Worcester Shrub Hill Station regeneration;• Electrification of both the Bristol to Birmingham and Snow Hill lines.Comment: WFDC supports all of the above and in particular increasing the car park capacity at Kidderminster Rail Station. However WFDC recognises the capacity limitations of Kidderminster Station and its limited abilities to cope with current natural growth both within the station confines of the car park and also on the highway network to access the station. The County Council must address these concerns if the additional services are to run successfully from Kidderminster. As the Kidderminster railway station is currently the second most heavily used railway station in Worcestershire and the improvements being proposed in the WRIS are likely to make it even busier, it needs additional car parking capacity to cope with the demand as well as measures such as residents’ parking permits to control the overspill parking on adjacent residential streets. The car parking capacity is already inadequate for the station and the local</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>residents suffer as a consequence by train users parking their cars on the neighbouring roads to the station. Comberton Road (A448) will also need some improvements as this is already a congested road at rush hour times and will become even busier with the changes to the railway station being proposed. The County Council must consider options to address this parking problem including a multi-decked car park. The WRIS states that journeys from Kidderminster represent 20% of all rail travel in the County, dominated by commuter flows into Birmingham. Whilst having a good service to Birmingham and Worcester, Kidderminster's connectivity southwards from Worcester depends upon the 2-hourly frequency Great Malvern-Bristol service and connectivity at Cheltenham Spa. Northbound journeys from Kidderminster require a change either between Birmingham Snow Hill/ Moor Street and Birmingham New Street or at Smethwick Galton Bridge.</p> <p>Comment: Improvements to both northbound and southbound journey times and frequencies from Kidderminster railway station is fully supported and encouraged by WFDC, but as previously discussed, car park capacity at the station would need to be increased to support the additional patronage to the station. Table 3.15 on page 29 shows the car parking capacity growth at Worcestershire stations to 2043, and includes Kidderminster and Blakedown. The figures show that the car parking capacity at both Kidderminster and Blakedown is currently inadequate and will get worse in the future. The primary focus should remain improving the capacity at the Kidderminster station being the main station for Wyre Forest District. If any improvements are proposed at Blakedown then wider consideration needs to be given to the Green Belt implications and the precedent for inviting pressure for residential growth. The Wyre Forest Transport Strategy referred to on page 41, states that the key rail focus of the strategy is Kidderminster and Blakedown station enhancements and</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Kidderminster to Birmingham journey time enhancements. Comment: WFDC is supportive of enhancements to both stations, but the key rail focus should be on the Kidderminster station as this is the main station for the District. As the dominant usage of Kidderminster station is commuter journeys to Birmingham then the WRIS should give greater priority to speeding up services and increasing capacity to Birmingham, including connections to HS2.</p> <p>Comment: Figure 4.2 on page 44 does not show the amount of new housing planned for the district from the emerging Local Plan, which is currently at the Preferred Options consultation stage. In the emerging plan, there is a housing need of 5,940 dwellings and an employment need of approximately 40ha of employment land.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.4.2 'Greater Birmingham Housing Market Allocations' on page 46 states that "The provision of new housing in the West Midlands is currently under review. As part of the review process, the Planning Inspector has identified a need for around 198,000 new dwellings in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (HMA) between 2011 and 2031 (the HMA stretches as far as Kidderminster, Bewdley and Bromsgrove). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the north Worcestershire authorities will be expected to accommodate at least some of this allocation although it should be noted that these findings, and the quantum of allocations, are yet to be formally adopted."</p> <p>Comment: This is factually incorrect, Wyre Forest does not form part of the Birmingham Housing Market Area. Wyre Forest forms a relatively self contained Housing Market Area; as such the Council is currently planning to only accommodate needs for its own population. The Objective Assessment of Housing Need, published in April 2017 stated that Wyre Forest District is "a largely self-contained housing market area." It concluded that "it is appropriate for Wyre Forest District to be considered to be a housing market area for the purposes of Local Planning Policy</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>although cognisance needs to be had of the interactions with other areas of Worcestershire and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull and Black Country areas, both in terms of net in-migration and travel to work patterns.” (OAHN, Amion, April 2017, page 10 para 2.27 and 2.28).On page 55 the WRIS refers to dramatic volume increases by 2043 for Worcester Foregate Street and Kidderminster railway stations – respectively from circa 3,500 to 6,800 passengers per day and from circa 2,500 to 5,000 passengers per day. The strategy discusses a ‘gap’ in the Route Study’s proposals, i.e. “A terminating service at Oxford is unlikely to be acceptable to Worcestershire County Council (or Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Councils) both in failing to provide a 2tph London and through services to London from smaller Worcestershire (and Oxford) stations. This is a core ‘gap’ in the Route Study’s proposals.”Comment: WFDC agree with the WRIS that the preferred service is very clearly based on a 2tph direct to London with reduced journey times, an example of which is shown in figure 5.9 on page 60. This route includes a stop at the new Worcestershire Parkway Station that is due to open in 2019. WFDC is also fully supportive of the principle of a possible Birmingham – Kidderminster – Bristol train line, and a Kidderminster – Worcester – London Paddington service. HS2 and Worcestershire - HS2 will radically reduce journey times from the West Midlands, not only to London, but to a whole series of destinations in the “Northern Powerhouse” – Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds and Derby/Nottingham – and onwards to Scotland. However, the WRIS states that the benefits of HS2 for Worcestershire are mixed. The key issues are set out in section 5.9.2, page 68, and include:• Connections to HS2 at Birmingham Curzon Street for Snow Hill lines direct connectivity will be excellent with Birmingham Moor Street becoming an integrated part of Curzon Street Station.• Access to Birmingham International (adjacent to</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Birmingham Airport) – it is not unlikely that many Worcestershire passengers would seek to access Birmingham Interchange via the M5 and M42 as they do to Birmingham International and Warwick Parkway now, with the resultant further pressure on the motorway network. Comment: Connections from Birmingham Moor Street to the HS2 Curzon Street railway station is welcomed by WFDC. Good connections to HS2 are important for the districts economy. However, the Council consider that more should be done to improve the connections on the Snow Hill line from Kidderminster to Birmingham International to make it easier and quicker to reach Birmingham Airport by public transport. It will also be important to have good connections to the proposed new Birmingham Interchange as part of the HS2 development. This would relieve pressure on the motorway network and would encourage people to use public transport instead of their car, which would benefit the environment. As previously discussed, the dominant usage of Kidderminster station is journeys to Birmingham – the speed and capacity of these journeys to the city centre need improving together with connections to HS2. Table 5.16 in the WRIS summaries a Gap Analysis between the current service provision, committed rail industry schemes, the industry's 2043 vision and the desired key improvements that are driven by Worcestershire's economic needs. Comment: WFDC agree with these findings, but would like to emphasise again the need for increased car parking capacity at Kidderminster railway station and the need to ease congestion on the local road network outside the railway station, i.e. A448 Comberton Road. Electrification - The WRIS acknowledges the current uncertainty regarding the future of electrification schemes in light of the GWML overruns. However, there remains the potential for the North Cotswold line to become a future 'island of non-electrification', even with bi-mode IEP trains and this is a gap warranting</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>industry planning attention. Comment: WFDC agree with the WRIS that attention needs to be drawn to the need for the North Cotswold line to benefit from electrification when funding is available. Page 81 of the WRIS refers to the “provision of additional car parking capacity at Kidderminster Station and/or development of Hartlebury or Blakedown stations to accommodate demand.” Page 83 goes on to say that Blakedown Station could be used as an “overspill for Kidderminster.” Comment: The Council feels strongly that Blakedown should not be considered as an overspill for Kidderminster Station; Kidderminster Station should be functional in its own right to accommodate the necessary supporting infrastructure to cope with growth demand. Whilst proper provision of car parking capacity at Blakedown station would be welcomed by WFDC to help reduce the amount of cars parked on residential streets near to the station, it is important to emphasise that Kidderminster station is the main railway station for the district and this is where car parking capacity should be concentrated along with improvements to the local road network used to access the station. There is a concern that a focus on Blakedown Rail Station could encourage unsustainable trip generation out to the eastern fringes of the District.</p> <p>Birmingham – Worcestershire – Cheltenham – Gloucester – Bristol train line</p> <p>The WRIS has tested two options for this route. These are 1) Kidderminster and Worcester Shrub Hill to Bristol or 2) Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway to Bristol. The WRIS concludes that the Kidderminster option is the stronger of the two. Comment: WFDC agree and fully support this conclusion that the Kidderminster option is the stronger of the two. People from Bromsgrove District would still be able to get onto the train at Worcester Foregate Street station having caught a train there from the Bromsgrove station. The economic benefits of this option for Kidderminster, combined with the potential Kidderminster-</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>London Paddington service, could be transformational for Wyre Forest District which has some of the most deprived areas in Worcestershire. This increased connectivity could mean that Kidderminster becomes a place where new businesses want to locate (yielding agglomeration benefits). With the proposed new housing and employment sites in the emerging Local Plan this would be a great opportunity for the district and WFDC is delighted that Wyre Forest could be chosen for these new and improved rail services. On page 92 of the strategy it makes reference to “continuing to develop and deliver schemes such as Kidderminster Station regeneration.”Comment: WFDC is fully supportive of the plans to upgrade and regenerate the Kidderminster Station. The proposed new pedestrian crossing on Comberton Road will make it much safer for commuters to cross this busy road. Improvements to the station itself are also welcomed. As part of the station regeneration, a priority should be the increase of car parking capacity to support commuters now and the demands in the future. The local road network will also need improvements to ease congestion around the station entrance and to reduce the amount of blockages on the highway network during peak travel times. The use of cyclepaths to the station should be encouraged so people have alternative methods of getting to the station instead of relying on the car.The strategy goes on to say that it will also continue to develop “station car park capacity upgrades (the findings of these latter studies have been extremely positive, with deliverable schemes recommended which are now under consideration regarding ‘next steps’ development).”Comment: These findings should be made available for public viewing. WFDC would be particularly interested to see what these findings say about Blakedown station as the WRIS refers to this as a station in need of increased car parking capacity. Has WCC done any analysis of trips to Stourbridge Junction from Wyre Forest to take</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>advantage of free car parking at that station? The rail strategy might provide an opportunity to reduce such unsustainable trips by enhancing car parking at the main station for the district, namely Kidderminster, but possibly also in a more modest way at Blakedown (which in planning terms is a small village located in the Green Belt). WFDC would not wish to encourage unsustainable trip generation to this location in the eastern fringes of the District unless it was replacing unsustainable trips that proceed even further at present to Stourbridge. That said, our strong preference is for much enhanced car parking provision at Kidderminster.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b> Overall the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy is to be welcomed and supported. However, it is considered that the final version of the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy and also the final version of LTP4 should provide more detail on certainty and prioritisation of the schemes identified for Wyre Forest. WFDC look forward to seeing the final versions of both the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy and also the LTP4 which is due to be published later this year. WFDC would also like to maintain a strong relationship between LTP4 and the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review and an iterative dialogue between WCC and WFDC will need to continue to ensure the infrastructure needs associated with future planned development will be met.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Network Rail	<p>Network Rail welcomes the opportunity to reflect comments on the Worcester Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS) as part of the consultation period.</p> <p>Long Term Planning Process</p> <p>As referenced in the WRIS, the Long Term Planning Process (LTPP) is a structured approach to planning the future of the strategic rail network. Network Rail leads this process as part of its license conditions through analysis and consultation with the rail industry and stakeholders. This process is, in turn, formed of several components. These are Market Studies, cross-boundary analysis and Route Studies. These different elements have been produced in a cyclical approach ahead of the subsequent Control Period.</p> <p>The studies developed and assessed choices for the long-term use and development of the network. Determining whether the conditional outputs from the relevant Market Studies can be accommodated on the existing network with committed enhancements is the starting point of the study. These conditional outputs reflect the emerging requirements for capacity and connectivity, building on the current infrastructure and the committed development of other interventions including HS2. It is important to note that the conditional outputs are dependent upon affordability, funding and a value for money business case. Equally, the conditional outputs need to be deliverable – technologically, operationally and physically.</p> <p>Each Route Study is governed and endorsed by a series of board, working groups and local stakeholder meetings. These meetings are formed of the wider industry including train and freight operators, government and local authorities.</p> <p>Through the LTPP, Worcestershire was primarily incorporated in the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study, with Western Route areas that impact the region included in the Western Route Study. Consequently,</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>We will update the final version of the WRIS to reflect the findings of the now published WM&amp;C Route Study along with the commitments within the new West Midlands Rail Franchise.</p> <p>We recognise that capacity is an existing issue on some of the key routes between Birmingham and Worcestershire &amp; we will make more explicit recognition of this in the final version of the WRIS. However, it should be noted that the focus of the WRIS has been to identify new services that enhance the County's connectivity in order to directly contribute towards the growth of Worcestershire's economy through an increase in GVA &amp; jobs creation.</p> <p>This approach creates a realistic &amp; reliable evidence base from which interventions can be prioritised and then be subject to further development work.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to deliver the WRIS conditional outputs.</p>



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Worcestershire County Council was a key attendee at meetings during the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study process.</p> <p>Worcester and the key conurbations of Bromsgrove, Kidderminster and Redditch are all included strategy for accommodating forecast passenger growth to 2043 in the West Midlands and Chilterns</p> <p>Route Study. This Route Study was published in draft for consultation form in June 2016, and whilst it is reflected in Chapter 5, few elements seem to have been represented elsewhere in the narrative of the WRIS.</p> <p>Capacity</p> <p>A primary example of this is the apparent priority of connectivity over capacity. When growth numbers are quoted, it is connectivity that is linked rather than the challenges around capacity on services to and from Worcester. The rail industry has identified capacity as a key constraint as outlined in the Route Study, with additional vehicles being required in line with forecast growth demand. This has been reflected in the West Midlands franchise Invitation to Tender (ITT), which will see the delivery of 85,000 extra seats across the franchise geography. Furthermore, the Route Study has identified the option for the new franchisee to strengthen train lengths by cascading diesel rolling stock currently serving Walsall – Rugeley following the completion of electrification of Chase line.</p> <p>It is of concern that this does not appear to have been reflected in the WRIS. Not only is capacity serving Worcester of key importance, but this will also provide important benefits to the city and the surrounding areas.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Connectivity</p> <p>In additional to the accommodation of forecast growth demand, connectivity Conditional Outputs were also identified in the Market Studies and subsequently tested as part of the rest of the LTPP. Where the connectivity outputs described in the WRIS go beyond those considered as part of the Route Study, these outputs should either be taken forward in conjunction with respective operators, or fed into the appropriate refranchising processes for the franchise specifier's consideration. These are the industry mechanisms for delivering key outputs for service change.</p> <p>Wider Economic Benefits</p> <p>It is positive to see that the consideration of wider economic benefits (WEBs) has formed part of the study, an approach which is of growing importance when making the case for infrastructure investment. Whilst WEBs do indeed make for a interesting narrative, they are most compelling when combined with a value for money case so as to contextualise the benefits with the operational and capital expenditure required to deliver the outputs.</p> <p>It is also important to temper WEBs with clear messaging so as not to create confusion. In the Executive Summary, the description that growth in the County will result in the boosting of the Gross Value Added (GVA) by £2.9bn is undermined by the next sentence which describes these as 'ambitions'. Although subtle, this messaging is of real importance. It is the difference between additional investment accommodating forecast demand and stimulating new growth.</p> <p>Furthermore, WEBs must be considered more broadly than one region. A primary example of this is that additional stops on existing services may deliver growth for one region, but this may be to the detriment of another region through additional journey times or potentially causes extraction of existing GVA. It is important that a thorough set of assumptions relating to WEBs is reflected in the document going forward.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Input into WRIS Process</p> <p>Finally, it is of disappointment that Network Rail was not made aware of the commissioning of this document until its publication for consultation. Ensuring a collaborative approach with rail industry must be seen as a key priority going forwards in delivering the aspirations of local stakeholders.</p> <p>To this end, Network Rail looks forward to working with Worcestershire County Council and the wider rail industry to develop these proposals further.</p> <p>Yours sincerely</p> <p>Chris Cole Strategic Planner</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Bromsgrove DC Strategic Planning	<p>Bromsgrove District Council – Worcestershire Draft Rail investment Strategy Response</p> <p>1 Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy (WDRIS), the below comments at this stage represents an officer response. Due to the tight timescale for consultation, there have not been any appropriate Council meetings for this response to be considered formally. This process will take place in September and should any amendments be required as a result of the formal consideration process we will advise you in due course.</p> <p>2 The Council welcomes the ambitious plan for investment in rail infrastructure, and acknowledges the investment already made in the district in the form of the new Bromsgrove Station. It has long been recognised in many forums and documents including the infrastructure delivery plan, which accompanies the Councils recently adopted Bromsgrove District Plan (BDP), that significant investment in all types of physical and social infrastructure are needed to support the development planned for across the District</p> <p>3 It is acknowledged that the WDRIS supports the development of the Worcestershire LTP4, these comments have been made with previously submitted comments on the LTP4 in mind, and in some instances cover some of the same concerns. As it is supporting the LTP4 it would have been beneficial if the WDRIS was published for consultation at the same time as the LTP4, in order to provide a full and more coherent response to both documents.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. The WRIS is designed to complement the sustainable transport policies already contained within the LTP4 &amp; transport mode integration will form part of any new infrastructure projects.</p> <p>The WRIS &amp; supporting economic modelling has been developed in line with the new and emerging development plans across the County including Bromsgrove. We will be happy to update the final version of the WRIS with greater reference to the BDP.</p> <p>Thank you for your corrections which we will again take into account as part of the final WRIS document.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>4 As expressed in the Councils response to LTP4 a significant issues is the lack of an overall transport strategy for Worcestershire and in particular concern to BDC, north Worcestershire. The production of the WDRIS in isolation from an overall strategy or complimentary strategies for other forms of transport highlights this point further. It is difficult to judge what the impacts of the improvements for rail provision will actually make, bearing in mind that rail transport in all cases also relies on other forms of transport, walk/cycle/bus/car to access the rail services in the first instance. Without similar complimentary strategies and investment in these other forms of transport, there is a concern that the impacts of the investment in rail provision will not be fully be realised.</p> <p>5 With these factors in mind we would echo previous comments submitted in relation to the LTP4 consultation, that an overall transport strategy for North Worcestershire is an essential project going forward. We would also reiterate the Council is committed to working with WCC and other stakeholders, to prepare and implement a strategy which helps inform future land use choices and subsequently then delivers the infrastructure required.</p> <p>6 An additional concern with the rail investment strategy is it is to internally focused on the rail network and not does not sufficiently link to other key influences. This is not just the other modes of transport as mentioned above, but also the wider development that is planned for across the District. It is acknowledged in chapter 4 that reference is made to the adopted BDP as well as many other plans, which is welcomed. Para 4.3.5 identifies the South Worcestershire Development plan see rail as being an important enabler of development. BDC would also contend that the BDP has a similar focus with multiple references to the importance of rail, and strategies to help enhanced access and therefore usage of Bromsgrove Station, we would respectfully request that this fact is reflected in any further versions of this strategy. What is not clear is, if/how this information has directly informed the conditional outputs in the later chapters of the plan. Whilst it is safe to assume that new development should place further pressure on the rail network, what is unclear is if the decisions for investment has clearly been linked to the location and quantum of further development.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>7 Another important point to note it that future planning decisions will be made on new locations and quanta for growth which is acknowledged at various points within the strategy, these decisions will have an impact on the need for future rail infrastructure. It is important that an element of flexibility is built into the strategy in order for future land use decisions to be adequately supported by appropriate infrastructure. This further strengthens the needs for an overall transport strategy.</p> <p>8 Parking improvements at railway stations have been included as a conditional output it is assumed this includes the 243 specified for Bromsgrove in table 3.15. Reference is made to a draft WRIS2 car parking study, we have been advised that this study is not yet available which is disappointing. In order to comment further on the likelihood of any parking improvements being made this study should be provided as soon as possible and we would request a similar amount of time to respond to it.</p> <p>Other minor comments are</p> <p>9 Section 4 also incorrectly includes the Kidderminster / Bewdley area in the greater Birmingham HMA, para 2.48, 4.52 and then 5.4 of the Peter Brett Associates phase 2 report identifies Wyre Forest as being outside the Greater Birmingham HMA.</p> <p>10 The bottom of para 4.4.2 the document incorrectly states the Bromsgrove plan is still in the planning process.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
<p>Redditch BC Development Plans</p>	<p>1 Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy (WDRIS), the below comments at this stage represents an officer response. Due to the tight timescale for consultation, there have not been any appropriate council meetings for this response to be considered formally. This process will take place in September and should any amendments be required as a result of the formal consideration process we will advise you in due course.</p> <p>2 The Council welcomes the ambitious plan for investment in rail infrastructure. It has long been recognised in many forums and documents including the infrastructure delivery plan, which accompanies the Councils recently adopted Borough of Redditch Local Plan No4 (BORLP4) that significant investment in all types of physical and social infrastructure are needed to support the development planned for across the Borough</p> <p>3 It is acknowledged that the WDRIS supports the development of the Worcestershire LTP4 these comments have been made with previously submitted comments on the LTP4 in mind, and in some instances cover some of the same concerns. As it is supporting the LTP4 it would have been beneficial if the WDRIS was published for consultation at the same time as the LTP4 in order to provide a full and more coherent response to both documents.</p> <p>4 As expressed in the Councils response to LTP4 a significant issues is the lack of an overall transport strategy for Worcestershire and in particular concern to RBC, north Worcestershire. The production of the WDRIS in isolation from an overall strategy or complimentary strategies for other forms of transport highlights this point further. It is difficult to judge what the impacts of the improvements for rail provision will actually make, bearing in mind that rail transport in all cases also relies on other forms of transport, walk/cycle/bus/car to access the rail services in the first instance. Without similar complimentary strategies and investment in these other forms of transport, there is a concern that the impacts of the investment in rail provision will not be fully be realised.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. The WRIS is designed to complement the sustainable transport policies already contained within the LTP4 &amp; transport mode integration will form part of any new infrastructure projects.</p> <p>The WRIS &amp; supporting economic modelling has been developed in line with the new and emerging development plans across the County including Redditch.</p> <p>We recognise the desire of the Borough Council for an express service between Redditch and Birmingham and will include this within our discussions with West Midlands Rail during the development of their own Rail Investment Strategy. However, we also recognise the limitations of the Cross City line (South) with its single track &amp; passing loop infrastructure.</p> <p>The provision of new services south of Redditch is in our opinion unviable due to the cost of providing a new rail line and the fact that a significant amount of development has taken place along the line of the old railway corridor / immediately adjacent to the station.</p> <p>We will update the WRIS to include reference to the commitments within the new West Midlands Rail Franchise including those relevant to Redditch.</p> <p>Thank you for your corrections which we will again take into account as part of the final WRIS document.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>5 With these factors in mind we would echo previous comments submitted in relation to the LTP4 consultation, that an overall transport strategy for North Worcestershire is an essential project going forward. We would also reiterate the Council is committed to working with WCC and other stakeholders to prepare and implement a strategy which helps inform future land use choices and subsequently then delivers the infrastructure required.</p> <p>6 An additional concern with the rail investment strategy is it is to internally focused on the rail network and not does not sufficiently link to other key influences. This is not just the other modes of transport as mentioned above, but also the wider development that is planned for across the Borough. It is acknowledged in chapter 4 that reference is made to the adopted BORLP4 as well as many other plans, which is welcomed. What is not clear is, if/how this information has directly informed the conditional outputs in the later chapters of the plan. Whilst it is safe to assume that new development should place further pressure on the rail network, what is unclear is if the decisions for investment has clearly been linked to the location and quantum of further development.</p> <p>7 Another important point to note it that future planning decisions will be made on new locations and quanta for growth which is acknowledged at various points within the strategy, these decisions will have an impact on the need for future rail infrastructure. It is important that an element of flexibility is built into the strategy in order for future land use decisions to be adequately supported by appropriate infrastructure. This further strengthens the needs for an overall transport strategy.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>8 RBC are also concerned that not enough attention has been paid to facilities and services in relation to the Borough. The Council has previously expressed a desire for an express train linking Redditch with Birmingham along the cross city line, it is hoped that this train would only stop at University and then New Street. This express link alongside fair parity with the wider west midlands area would help and encourage people and businesses to locate in the Borough as they would be linked the major economic hub of the city by a fast and direct train service. It is disappointing that this has seemingly not been considered within this strategy, whereas the strategy has looked at, albeit to rule out providing further services from Redditch to the south, which has not been discussed with the Borough Council.</p> <p>9 Parking improvements at railway stations have been included as a conditional output it is assumed this includes the 151 specified for Redditch in table 3.15. Reference is made to a draft WRIS2 car parking study, we have been advised that this study is not yet available which is disappointing. In order to comment further on the likelihood of any parking improvements being made this study should be provided as soon as possible and we would request a similar amount of time to respond to it.</p> <p>Other minor comments are</p> <p>10 Section 4 also incorrectly includes the Kidderminster / Bewdley area in the greater Birmingham HMA, para 2.48, 4.52 and then 5.4 of the phase 2 report identifies Wyre Forest as being outside the Greater Birmingham HMA.</p> <p>11 The bottom of para 4.4.2 the document incorrectly states the Bromsgrove plan is still in the planning process.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Historic England	<p>Historic England commented on the Local Transport Plan 4 and accompanying SEA for Worcestershire on 17 March 2017 and our comments are still relevant and live. We note that the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy Summer 2017 is a document in support of the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). We note from the map (page 15) that there is a new proposed station at Worcestershire Parkway - has this been subject to heritage assessment? We further note on page 35 that this scheme is about to commence so it is likely that all of the relevant comments will already have been given due consideration. Where there are railway works such as electrification, additional station car parking, junction improvements, etc. we recommend that the historic environment is carefully considered and that heritage assets, designated and undesignated, are protected and where possible enhancement opportunities sought. Historic England will comment on housing growth proposals and any other proposed growth and policies in the relevant Local Plans, though welcomes the inclusion of these issues within this document. The connectivity between all of the relevant plans that could affect the rail investment strategy for Worcestershire is positive and sets the argument for why rail investment is required. As with any of our comments, Historic England is keen to ensure that the historic environment is fully considered in any plans for development and that heritage assets are protected and where possible, enhanced. Page 55 highlights the need for an additional 2,835 parking spaces and we would request that any impact on the historic environment, as a result of car parking, is fully assessed and appropriate avoidance/ mitigation measures incorporated into future proposals. Where schemes are suggested that lie outside of the West Midlands, we would recommend that you contact the specific local office for advice from Historic England. Worcester Shrub Hill regeneration referenced on page 86 and the relevant Shrub Hill Masterplan 2017; will need to consider if there are any implications for the historic environment and if so, how heritage assets can be protected and where possible, enhanced. We would recommend in the next steps section beginning on page 91 that engaging with other stakeholders includes environmental stakeholders and recognises the importance of early engagement with Historic England, in any future schemes or ideas where the historic environment may be affected.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments which we will take into consideration as we begin to develop and deliver the new schemes identified within the WRIS and will contact the local Historic England offices as required.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Bromsgrove Liberal Democrats	<p>Liberal Democrats believe high-quality public transport is essential to building sustainable communities and the local and national economy. Britain needs better transport infrastructure, a modern railway system run for the benefit of its customers, and less congestion and pollution on the roads. We also need to ensure that local communities, particularly rural communities, remain connected with local rail and bus services, and that stations serve the needs of their local community. We need to build a transport system fit for the 21st century.</p> <p>We support the commitment by Worcestershire County Council and its partners to invest in and develop our rail network to improve connectivity in Worcestershire and we welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We are, however, disappointed that the strategy does not offer a more ambitious vision for the county and would urge the County Council and relevant partners to consider a more ambitious plan to improve the connectivity and environmental sustainability of our community.</p> <p>(Please note our response is on behalf of our members in Bromsgrove District and does not necessarily reflect a county wide view.)</p> <p>We cannot afford any more delays to the extension of the 'Cross City' line</p> <p>We are extremely disappointed that works to enable the extension of the 'Cross City' line, and the introduction of a more regular service, will now not be completed until May 2018. Commuters from Bromsgrove are suffering intolerable levels of overcrowding on a daily basis and we would urge the County Council and relevant partners to ensure there are no further delays to this timetable.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and support for the WRIS. Our aim is to create a vision that is ambitious but also realistically deliverable.</p> <p>The completion of the Bromsgrove electrification scheme is a Network Rail issue (they are delivering the scheme) although we similarly would like to see the enhancements delivered as early as possible.</p> <p>We agree that car parking at Alvechurch is poor and are looking at options to enhance the car parking as part of our wider work investigating parking options across the County's stations.</p> <p>Parking changes at Bromsgrove are set by the train operator and an annual season ticket costs £360 – less than £1 per day. By comparison parking at Coventry Station is £12 per day (Monday – Friday).</p> <p>Charges at other stations are also set by the train operators and we agree that they should be fair and reasonable.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Improvements needed to facilities at railway stations</p> <p>We acknowledge the investment in upgrades to local stations including Bromsgrove and Alvechurch and the significant improvements that have resulted from this including modernised facilities and increased capacity.</p> <p>Nevertheless, a number of issues remain:</p> <p>Despite considerable investment in recent upgrades, the surface at Alvechurch Station car park remains extremely poor and prone to flooding creating hazardous conditions for passengers. We would urge the County Council and relevant partners to address this as a priority. This should not lead to the introduction of charges for spaces that are currently free to use.</p> <p>Ample high-quality parking has been provided as part of the upgrade to Bromsgrove Station but the local community is failing to reap the full benefits due to prohibitively expensive charges which are forcing commuters to park on surrounding residential streets causing significant inconvenience to local residents. This situation is particularly galling since charging is applied inconsistently across the network and parking offered free at some stations. We would urge the County Council and relevant partners to review their parking charges policy and offer residents in Bromsgrove fairer, more affordable parking options. Ideally, we believe the parking should be offered free of charge.</p> <p>We welcome the 28-space car park offering free off-road parking provided on the new Cala development Foxhills at Fiery Hill Road, Barnt Green and hope that this will alleviate the on-road parking problems on surrounding roads near Barnt Green Station. We also call on the County Council and relevant partners to review parking charges at the main station car park and offer residents in Barnt Green fairer, more affordable parking. Ideally, we believe the parking should be offered free of charge at both locations.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Staffing levels at Bromsgrove are again set by the industry and we will raise this issue with West Midlands Rail during the development of their own Rail Investment Strategy.</p> <p>The challenge at Wythall Station is that it is landlocked and providing car parking to serve the station would be much more expensive than providing additional parking at other nearby stations such as Whitlocks End. Our aim is to meet local demand but in a way that is most economically viable for the public purse. We do however agree that the station itself is in need of investment &amp; we will work with West Midlands Rail to identify what could happen at the station to improve passenger facilities.</p> <p>The wider LTP4 recognises the importance of transport integration to achieve a fully sustainable transport network. The WRIS should therefore be read alongside the commitments already within the LTP4 regarding public transport, walking &amp; cycling initiatives for new and existing stations.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Staffing at the ticket office in Bromsgrove Station is not consistent and the facility is frequently closed at times when it is advertised as being open. This presents a huge inconvenience to passengers especially those looking to buy travel cards and those with more complex needs. We would urge the County Council and relevant partners to ensure more consistent and reliable staffing at stations.</p> <p>Wythall Station faces similar challenges to Bromsgrove station in that it is poorly connected to much of the community it is supposed to serve. Even those that can access the station are faced with a poor service. The Stratford-Upon-Avon to Birmingham line desperately needs investment to improve the timetable so that more than one train an hour is offered to residents.</p> <p>We are extremely disappointed to read that providing parking facilities at Wythall Station is not considered 'economically viable'. We reject this viewpoint and would argue instead that it is often under developed stations that can benefit most from investment that improves access and increases We would urge the County Council and relevant partners to develop plans to give Wythall Station the investment it deserves too.</p> <p>More radical and joined up approach needed to meet challenges</p> <p>Overall, we feel the strategy does not offer radical enough solutions to the huge connectivity challenges facing our District. It is a sad indictment on our failure to properly address these challenges that two thirds of local residents drive to work, despite the fact they are typically only 15 miles from the centre of the second biggest city in the UK. Furthermore, it is especially concerning that a number of locations in our district are monitored for higher than average levels of air pollution. This is a threat to the quality of our environment and the health of residents. We can and must do better.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>We welcome the strategy's commitment to giving residents across Worcestershire greater access to regional and national locations through better connectivity to long distance rail. Better access to destinations such as Manchester, Bristol, Plymouth and Newcastle from Worcester will undoubtedly benefit local residents. However, outside of the delayed plans to extend the 'Cross City' line to Bromsgrove there is little in the strategy to improve connectivity between Bromsgrove and its principal destination for commuters; Birmingham.</p> <p>Despite huge investment to Bromsgrove station it remains inaccessible to most residents within the town unless they drive. The County Council has made clear its intention to focus much of its new housing development along with overspill new housing development from Birmingham within the Bromsgrove 'corridor'. This simply is not sustainable without significant improvements to the town's connectivity which are simply not being offered currently.</p> <p>We acknowledge that this strategy's remit is limited to railways but believe a broader review of our creaking public transport network is required with a view to significant investment to improve bus services too, especially given the non-central location of many of our railway stations.</p> <p>We support the efforts of a number of local parish councils to provide a community bus service, one of whose functions will be to connect the rail stations to residents' homes. It is encouraging that local people are doing something at grass roots level, but we really need the County Council and partners to invest in improving the availability, frequency and connectivity of local bus services on a bigger scale.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The County Council clearly has a genuine commitment to improving our rail services which we acknowledge and welcome. Significant improvements have benefited local communities in recent years, including upgrades to Bromsgrove and Alvechurch Stations. Nevertheless, we feel that we have been sold short by the strategy put forward for consultation this summer. It does not fully address a number of significant short comings at many of our railways stations. These shortcomings are important because they reduce the viability of rail travel for many residents. Worse still, by failing to properly consider interconnectivity with bus services, which in many of our communities are extremely scarce, we feel the strategy is not able to deliver the radical improvements our communities require to truly become better connected and more environmentally sustainable</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Wyre Forest DC	<p>The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS) is an ambitious strategy that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) has prepared to evidence its economic case – in terms of GVA and jobs – for enhanced County rail connectivity.</p> <p>The strategy proposes 4 overarching Conditional Outputs for rail service development which would deliver £50.42m GVA per annum and 1,151 new jobs in the County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Trains per Hour Worcester-Oxford-Paddington - £21.22m GVA p.a. and 475 new jobs;</li> <li>• 1 Train per Hour Kidderminster-Droitwich Spa-Worcester-Paddington - £13.8m GVA p.a. and 273 new jobs;</li> <li>• Calls at Worcestershire Parkway in Bristol-Manchester and Plymouth-Newcastle Services - £9.6m GVA p.a. and 250 new jobs;</li> <li>• Regional Service between Kidderminster/Bromsgrove, Worcester and Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester and Bristol - £5.73m GVA p.a. and 153 new jobs.</li> </ul> <p>Comment: Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) supports the principle of this ambitious strategy and recognises the benefits to the County as a whole. The provision of a better public transport system and the creation of new jobs is supported and encouraged by WFDC. By investing in our rail network we will help to sustain economic growth, increase connectivity and reduce the reliance on motor vehicles which will improve the environment and help to reduce the impact on climate change. The comments set out in this response will focus mainly on the parts of the proposed strategy that relate to Wyre Forest District.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your support for the WRIS, we look forward to working with you to deliver its objectives.</p> <p>We believe that there is a balance to be struck between enhancing access to Kidderminster station, which suffers from significant road traffic congestion issues, with resultant noise and air pollution, and providing access at alternative stations (including Blakedown) which already have good levels of train service and locations close to the Strategic Road Network.</p> <p>The cost of resolving all traffic congestion issues on the approaches to Kidderminster station (if possible) would far outweigh the costs of providing car parking at Blakedown Station.</p> <p>We are therefore happy to continue working with you to identify where improvements can be made over and above those already being provided as part of the Kidderminster Station redevelopment scheme.</p> <p>We will update Figure 4.2 to include the newly emerging housing and employment allocations.</p> <p>We will update the final version of the WRIS to correct the reference to the Birmingham HMA. Thank you for this correction.</p> <p>We will also update the final version of the WRIS to include the commitments within the West Midlands Rail Franchise to enhance services between Kidderminster and Birmingham. We agree that it will be important to have good connections to Birmingham Interchange for access to HS2 services.</p>



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS) begins by outlining some of the key challenges that the County faces over the next decade or so. With the newly adopted Local Plans of South Worcestershire, Bromsgrove and Redditch allocated new housing sites to be delivered over their plan periods and the emerging Wyre Forest District Local Plan proposing to allocate further housing numbers, there is increasing pressure on the rail network. The WRIS states that the “County’s rail services will not match these ambitions without significant development and investment beyond that proposed by the rail industry.”</p> <p>Comment: Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) acknowledges this issue and supports the requirement for significant development and investment to improve the rail service for Worcestershire County.</p> <p>On page 4 of the WRIS it identifies one of the key challenges for Kidderminster as its “limited connectivity to London and southwards.”</p> <p>Comment: WFDC recognise this as an important challenge for the District. However, there are other challenges applicable to Wyre Forest District that are mentioned elsewhere in the strategy document that are also considered to be significant and worthy of investment to rectify and improve.</p> <p>The infrastructure to support Worcestershire’s Vision is set out on page 5 of the document and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Cotswold Line Capacity Upgrade;</li> <li>• Worcester Area and Droitwich Spa to Stoke Works Capacity Upgrade;</li> <li>• New Car Park Capacity and/or new stations;</li> <li>• Worcester Shrub Hill Station regeneration;</li> <li>• Electrification of both the Bristol to Birmingham and Snow Hill lines.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: WFDC supports all of the above and in particular increasing the car park capacity at Kidderminster Rail Station. However WFDC recognises the capacity limitations of Kidderminster Station and its limited abilities to cope with current natural growth both within the station confines of the car park and also on the highway network to access the station. The County Council must address these concerns if the additional services are to run successfully from Kidderminster. As the Kidderminster railway station is currently the second most heavily used railway station in Worcestershire and the improvements being proposed in the WRIS are likely to make it even busier, it needs additional car parking capacity to cope with the demand as well as measures such as residents' parking permits to control the overspill parking on adjacent residential streets. The car parking capacity is already inadequate for the station and the local residents suffer as a consequence by train users parking their cars on the neighbouring roads to the station. Comberton Road (A448) will also need some improvements as this is already a congested road at rush hour times and will become even busier with the changes to the railway station being proposed. The County Council must consider options to address this parking problem including a multi-decked car park.</p> <p>The WRIS states that journeys from Kidderminster represent 20% of all rail travel in the County, dominated by commuter flows into Birmingham. Whilst having a good service to Birmingham and Worcester, Kidderminster's connectivity southwards from Worcester depends upon the 2-hourly frequency Great Malvern-Bristol service and connectivity at Cheltenham Spa. Northbound journeys from Kidderminster require a change either between Birmingham Snow Hill/Moor Street and Birmingham New Street or at Smethwick Galton Bridge.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: Improvements to both northbound and southbound journey times and frequencies from Kidderminster railway station is fully supported and encouraged by WFDC, but as previously discussed, car park capacity at the station would need to be increased to support the additional patronage to the station. Table 3.15 on page 29 shows the car parking capacity growth at Worcestershire stations to 2043, and includes Kidderminster and Blakedown. The figures show that the car parking capacity at both Kidderminster and Blakedown is currently inadequate and will get worse in the future. The primary focus should remain improving the capacity at the Kidderminster station being the main station for Wyre Forest District. If any improvements are proposed at Blakedown then wider consideration needs to be given to the Green Belt implications and the precedent for inviting pressure for residential growth.</p> <p>The Wyre Forest Transport Strategy referred to on page 41, states that the key rail focus of the strategy is Kidderminster and Blakedown station enhancements and Kidderminster to Birmingham journey time enhancements.</p> <p>Comment: WFDC is supportive of enhancements to both stations, but the key rail focus should be on the Kidderminster station as this is the main station for the District. As the dominant usage of Kidderminster station is commuter journeys to Birmingham then the WRIS should give greater priority to speeding up services and increasing capacity to Birmingham, including connections to HS2.</p> <p>Comment: Figure 4.2 on page 44 does not show the amount of new housing planned for the district from the emerging Local Plan, which is currently at the Preferred Options consultation stage. In the emerging plan, there is a housing need of 5,940 dwellings and an employment need of approximately 40ha of employment land.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Paragraph 4.4.2 ‘Greater Birmingham Housing Market Allocations’ on page 46 states that “The provision of new housing in the West Midlands is currently under review. As part of the review process, the Planning Inspector has identified a need for around 198,000 new dwellings in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (HMA) between 2011 and 2031 (the HMA stretches as far as Kidderminster, Bewdley and Bromsgrove). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the north Worcestershire authorities will be expected to accommodate at least some of this allocation although it should be noted that these findings, and the quantum of allocations, are yet to be formally adopted.”</p> <p>Comment: This is factually incorrect, Wyre Forest does not form part of the Birmingham Housing Market Area. Wyre Forest forms a relatively self contained Housing Market Area; as such the Council is currently planning to only accommodate needs for its own population. The Objective Assessment of Housing Need, published in April 2017 stated that Wyre Forest District is “a largely self-contained housing market area.” It concluded that “it is appropriate for Wyre Forest District to be considered to be a housing market area for the purposes of Local Planning Policy although cognisance needs to be had of the interactions with other areas of Worcestershire and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull and Black Country areas, both in terms of net in-migration and travel to work patterns.” (OAHN, Amion, April 2017, page 10 para 2.27 and 2.28).</p> <p>On page 55 the WRIS refers to dramatic volume increases by 2043 for Worcester Foregate Street and Kidderminster railway stations – respectively from circa 3,500 to 6,800 passengers per day and from circa 2,500 to 5,000 passengers per day. The strategy discusses a ‘gap’ in the Route Study’s proposals, i.e. “A terminating service at Oxford is unlikely to be acceptable to Worcestershire County Council (or Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Councils) both in failing to provide a 2tph London and through services to London from smaller Worcestershire (and Oxford) stations. This is a core ‘gap’ in the Route Study’s proposals.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: WFDC agree with the WRIS that the preferred service is very clearly based on a 2tph direct to London with reduced journey times, an example of which is shown in figure 5.9 on page 60. This route includes a stop at the new Worcestershire Parkway Station that is due to open in 2019. WFDC is also fully supportive of the principle of a possible Birmingham – Kidderminster – Bristol train line, and a Kidderminster – Worcester – London Paddington service.</p> <p>HS2 and Worcestershire - HS2 will radically reduce journey times from the West Midlands, not only to London, but to a whole series of destinations in the “Northern Powerhouse” – Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds and Derby/Nottingham – and onwards to Scotland. However, the WRIS states that the benefits of HS2 for Worcestershire are mixed. The key issues are set out in section 5.9.2, page 68, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections to HS2 at Birmingham Curzon Street for Snow Hill lines direct connectivity will be excellent with Birmingham Moor Street becoming an integrated part of Curzon Street Station.</li> <li>• Access to Birmingham International (adjacent to Birmingham Airport) – it is not unlikely that many Worcestershire passengers would seek to access Birmingham Interchange via the M5 and M42 as they do to Birmingham International and Warwick Parkway now, with the resultant further pressure on the motorway network.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: Connections from Birmingham Moor Street to the HS2 Curzon Street railway station is welcomed by WFDC. Good connections to HS2 are important for the districts economy. However, the Council consider that more should be done to improve the connections on the Snow Hill line from Kidderminster to Birmingham International to make it easier and quicker to reach Birmingham Airport by public transport. It will also be important to have good connections to the proposed new Birmingham Interchange as part of the HS2 development. This would relieve pressure on the motorway network and would encourage people to use public transport instead of their car, which would benefit the environment. As previously discussed, the dominant usage of Kidderminster station is journeys to Birmingham – the speed and capacity of these journeys to the city centre need improving together with connections to HS2.</p> <p>Table 5.16 in the WRIS summaries a Gap Analysis between the current service provision, committed rail industry schemes, the industry’s 2043 vision and the desired key improvements that are driven by Worcestershire’s economic needs.</p> <p>Comment: WFDC agree with these findings, but would like to emphasise again the need for increased car parking capacity at Kidderminster railway station and the need to ease congestion on the local road network outside the railway station, i.e. A448 Comberton Road.</p> <p>Electrification - The WRIS acknowledges the current uncertainty regarding the future of electrification schemes in light of the GWML overruns. However, there remains the potential for the North Cotswold line to become a future ‘island of non-electrification’, even with bi-mode IEP trains and this is a gap warranting industry planning attention.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: WFDC agree with the WRIS that attention needs to be drawn to the need for the North Cotswold line to benefit from electrification when funding is available.</p> <p>Page 81 of the WRIS refers to the “provision of additional car parking capacity at Kidderminster Station and/or development of Hartlebury or Blakedown stations to accommodate demand.” Page 83 goes on to say that Blakedown Station could be used as an “overspill for Kidderminster.”</p> <p>Comment: The Council feels strongly that Blakedown should not be considered as an overspill for Kidderminster Station; Kidderminster Station should be functional in its own right to accommodate the necessary supporting infrastructure to cope with growth demand. Whilst proper provision of car parking capacity at Blakedown station would be welcomed by WFDC to help reduce the amount of cars parked on residential streets near to the station, it is important to emphasise that Kidderminster station is the main railway station for the district and this is where car parking capacity should be concentrated along with improvements to the local road network used to access the station. There is a concern that a focus on Blakedown Rail Station could encourage unsustainable trip generation out to the eastern fringes of the District.</p> <p>Birmingham – Worcestershire – Cheltenham – Gloucester – Bristol train line</p> <p>The WRIS has tested two options for this route. These are 1) Kidderminster and Worcester Shrub Hill to Bristol or 2) Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway to Bristol. The WRIS concludes that the Kidderminster option is the stronger of the two.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: WFDC agree and fully support this conclusion that the Kidderminster option is the stronger of the two. People from Bromsgrove District would still be able to get onto the train at Worcester Foregate Street station having caught a train there from the Bromsgrove station. The economic benefits of this option for Kidderminster, combined with the potential Kidderminster-London Paddington service, could be transformational for Wyre Forest District which has some of the most deprived areas in Worcestershire. This increased connectivity could mean that Kidderminster becomes a place where new businesses want to locate (yielding agglomeration benefits). With the proposed new housing and employment sites in the emerging Local Plan this would be a great opportunity for the district and WFDC is delighted that Wyre Forest could be chosen for these new and improved rail services.</p> <p>On page 92 of the strategy it makes reference to “continuing to develop and deliver schemes such as Kidderminster Station regeneration.”</p> <p>Comment: WFDC is fully supportive of the plans to upgrade and regenerate the Kidderminster Station. The proposed new pedestrian crossing on Comberton Road will make it much safer for commuters to cross this busy road. Improvements to the station itself are also welcomed. As part of the station regeneration, a priority should be the increase of car parking capacity to support commuters now and the demands in the future. The local road network will also need improvements to ease congestion around the station entrance and to reduce the amount of blockages on the highway network during peak travel times. The use of cyclepaths to the station should be encouraged so people have alternative methods of getting to the station instead of relying on the car.</p> <p>The strategy goes on to say that it will also continue to develop “station car park capacity upgrades (the findings of these latter studies have been extremely positive, with deliverable schemes recommended which are now under consideration regarding ‘next steps’ development).”</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Comment: These findings should be made available for public viewing. WFDC would be particularly interested to see what these findings say about Blakedown station as the WRIS refers to this as a station in need of increased car parking capacity. Has WCC done any analysis of trips to Stourbridge Junction from Wyre Forest to take advantage of free car parking at that station? The rail strategy might provide an opportunity to reduce such unsustainable trips by enhancing car parking at the main station for the district, namely Kidderminster, but possibly also in a more modest way at Blakedown (which in planning terms is a small village located in the Green Belt). WFDC would not wish to encourage unsustainable trip generation to this location in the eastern fringes of the District unless it was replacing unsustainable trips that proceed even further at present to Stourbridge. That said, our strong preference is for much enhanced car parking provision at Kidderminster.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>Overall the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy is to be welcomed and supported. However, it is considered that the final version of the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy and also the final version of LTP4 should provide more detail on certainty and prioritisation of the schemes identified for Wyre Forest. WFDC look forward to seeing the final versions of both the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy and also the LTP4 which is due to be published later this year.</p> <p>WFDC would also like to maintain a strong relationship between LTP4 and the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review and an iterative dialogue between WCC and WFDC will need to continue to ensure the infrastructure needs associated with future planned development will be met.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Campaign for Better Transport	<p>We welcome the strategy and hope that the aspirations included in it are delivered, as they will benefit passengers not only in Worcestershire but throughout the wider region. However, we note that many of the more ambitious aspirations (for example electrification of the line between Birmingham and Bristol) may not be delivered for a number of years and the recent announcement that funding for enhancements is being reduced can only delay many of these.</p> <p>However, the county council and other authorities in the region need to make the case for the improvements identified in the strategy to Government and the rail industry, as failing to do so will only mean the railway continuing to creak with infrastructure that is not fit for purpose, and will fail to address the pressing need for modal shift from the M5 where congestion is affecting the economy and pollution is affecting public health.</p> <p>Kidderminster</p> <p>We welcome the proposals to replace the drab 1960s British Rail station with one that will provide better facilities for users and will be an attractive gateway to the Wyre Forest and Severn Valley. However, it needs to be an interchange – providing connectivity with the local bus network as the new station in Bromsgrove does, with decent information and RTI.</p> <p>Access to Cross Country services at Bromsgrove</p> <p>The decision by Arriva Cross Country to withdraw their limited calls from Bromsgrove once the Cross City service is extended southwards is a retrograde move – especially given the recent rebuilding of the station! We would urge that Worcestershire County Council uses the opportunity of the re-letting of the cross Country franchise in 2019 to lobby for some of the 94 Cross Country services that pass through Bromsgrove each day to call at the station.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and support for the WRIS.</p> <p>The new Kidderminster Station is being designed to include a revised forecourt with improved facilities for bus, taxi &amp; car-drop off. In addition, pedestrian facilities are to be improved. This will ensure that the station is much more accessible than it currently is.</p> <p>We recognise the importance of calling north and south-bound cross-country services at Bromsgrove in order to improve regional and national connectivity. Bromsgrove will benefit from new trains and a 3 train per hour timetable to and from Birmingham following completion of the Bromsgrove Electrification scheme in 2018. We are already planning to use the Cross Country franchise consultation process as a vehicle to lobby for enhanced connectivity, including those new services promoted through the WRIS – e.g. Conditional Output WAB2 – Provision of new direct train services between Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway, Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester, Bristol Parkway and Bristol Temple Meads.</p> <p>Thank you for your support of WRIS Condition Output WAB3 – provision of infrastructure enhancements in the Worcester and Droitwich areas. We have already begun discussions with Network Rail and the wider industry regarding this much needed intervention to enhance capacity in the area.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>This would not just benefit users in Bromsgrove but also passengers on Cross City in South Birmingham, who currently have to travel into New Street if they want to connect with a Cross Country train westwards towards Cardiff or Bristol, as well as potential users from within a larger catchment area including Redditch, Halesowen and Solihull who may find using Bromsgrove as a railhead attractive.</p> <p>Interchange between Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway</p> <p>There also needs to be services calling at both Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway, if the new station being funded by the county council to serve the Cross Country and Great Malvern – London Paddington routes is to realise its full potential.</p> <p>Droitwich Spa – Stoke Works Junction Doubling</p> <p>The single line is a constraint on the growth of the Hereford – Worcester – Birmingham New Street service. It would be a huge benefit if doubling could take place to allow a more frequent service which is more competitive with the M5. The county council should push for this to be done as soon as possible.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
GWR	<p>GWR welcomes the interest that Worcestershire County Council is taking in the strategic development of the rail network and applauds the ambition in looking to develop a Rail Investment Strategy (WRIS). The WRIS currently focuses on connectivity and also needs to consider existing capacity issues on the network. The document also includes a large amount of detail about the existing rail infrastructure, which distracts from the purpose of the document and is not necessary.</p> <p>GWR supports many of the Conditional Outputs identified through the strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GWR is fully supportive of further investment in the North Cotswolds Line and agrees that the operation of two trains per hour between Worcester and London is the right model for the line, one providing a regular hourly local service and the other a faster service between the key centres. The calling pattern of the faster service requires careful consideration and GWR will work with WCC as part of the NCL Taskforce to determine this.</li> <li>• GWR aspire to provide a higher frequency (3-4 trains per hour) service between Hanborough and Oxford, potentially as part of a cross-city shuttle service. This will be supported by infrastructure enhancements at the south end of the NCL and in the medium term, GWR would advocate electrification of the line between Oxford and Hanborough, within the same timescales as electrification between Didcot and Oxford. A level of enhancement to Hanborough may be feasible with infrastructure enhancement around the same station itself and without the need for redoubling, which could deliver a 'quick-win' for the NCL Task Force.</li> <li>• GWR is also supportive of the concept of increasing connectivity to the Wyre Forest and Kidderminster.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We believe that providing a commentary on the existing rail infrastructure constraints provides an important context for readers of the rest of the document.</p> <p>Thank you for your support for the Conditional Outputs and we look forward to working with you to deliver them.</p> <p>We recognise that capacity challenges already exist on the network and we will expand the final version of the WRIS to reflect this. It should be noted though that our objective is to focus on providing new connectivity as a means to achieving economic growth &amp; development within the County.</p> <p>We agree that using a ratio of passengers to parking spaces is a fairly broad-brush assessment tool. However, it does serve to illustrate the scale of parking problems faced across Worcestershire stations. Further detail will be provided as part of the second phase of work (WRIS2) which will look at car parking provision on a case by case basis. This will include Pershore &amp; Honeybourne Stations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>The strategy is unnecessarily negative about the Rail Industry's LTPP, which whilst strategic, has different objectives to the WRIS. The WRIS approach of focusing on how improved 'Connectivity' can facilitate economic growth is useful but needs to dovetail with the LTPP and recognise that there are significant on-train capacity challenges today that will be exacerbated with future demand growth and need addressing. At peak times North Cotswolds Line train services suffer from on-train capacity problems and other TOCs in the region face similar challenges. The WRIS must therefore consider how best to support the progression of priority schemes from the Rail Industry's Long Term Planning Process.</p> <p>Car Parking</p> <p>GWR fully supports the focus on car park expansion and measures to improve access to stations. Such measures are crucial to allow the railway to play a full role in the development of the Worcestershire economy. WCC, WLEP and Local Planning Authorities have a key role to play in enabling and facilitating car parking developing when considering future development and supporting infrastructure, from both a land allocation and funding perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WRIS describes a desired ratio between the number of car parking spaces and passenger journeys. We believe this is not the right metric to use to consider the required quantum of car parking for stations. The correct quantum should be based upon the individual circumstances of each station including the catchment area, demographics and local development, and the nature of the different stations on the line are too varied for a 'one-size-fits-all' ratio to be appropriate.</li> <li>• The right answer for the Worcester stations may actually be that they have very limited car parking, if there is sufficient capacity at Worcestershire Parkway or other stations located to be able to play a 'Parkway' role, such as Pershore and Honeybourne</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>We acknowledge that the GVA does not take into account BCR / costs etc. &amp; recognise that such important considerations must be taken into account at the next stage. The priority within the WRIS has been to identify measures that will best support economic growth and development in Worcestershire in an industry recognised format.</p> <p>Thank you for your corrections which we will address within the final version of the WRIS.</p> <p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant priority should be given to car park expansion at Pershore. The previous car parking scheme proved undeliverable but a revised scheme on land owned by Wychavon is considered feasible. Development of a strong strategy and political support for the scheme will support its delivery.</li> <li>• The existing car park at Honeybourne has significantly more than 11 car parking spaces and any strategy statement that suggests a future requirement must take into account existing latent demand and future demand generated by the Long Marston Garden Town.</li> </ul> <p>General points:</p> <p>The WRIS has a significant focus on infrastructure which is considered unnecessary within a strategic document which should be focussed upon Outcomes, particularly in advance of detailed optioneering work to identify the best way to deliver the outcomes.</p> <p>The document also includes Ticketing which does not appear to ‘fit’ with the more general theme of generating growth through new connectivity and gives the impression that the Strategy is somewhat confused. We would suggest removing this section.</p> <p>Much of the operational detail in the WRIS, such as large parts of Section 3, would be better accommodated in an Appendix – the purpose of the WRIS is to be focussed on connectivity and service outcomes. The level of detail provided is unlikely to be of interest to the target audience when lobbying and seeking to secure infrastructure investment.</p> <p>The GVA model applied to possible enhancements is innovative and applauded but should be one of a number of inputs into a prioritisation. The current approach ignores BCR, cost or affordability which must also be considered.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF’s objectives.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Specific points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy incorrectly states that the case for Electrification is based upon faster train acceleration. The majority of the case is built upon long term operating costs.</li> <li>• There are inaccuracies in the description of the current Network Rail route boundaries.</li> <li>• 3.6.4 – Henwick Turnback –Planned for delivery in December 2017 and is not just for IET, but is an enhancement to the limited network capability in the area and designed to permit service improvements for both operators and their services;</li> <li>• The connectivity diagrams throughout need revision – there are currently at least four trains per hour between Swindon to Reading and at least one tph between Swindon and Cheltenham</li> <li>• 4.2.5, 5.5.1 – the development of the NCL Vision was not led by Worcestershire County Council but was the outcome of a joint initiative between the Local Authorities along the line, GWR and Network Rail. For the Taskforce to be successful, it is essential that the spirit of joint working and collaboration is maintained.</li> <li>• 5.8 – The electrification section detracts from the positives of the strategy, GWR considers that there is no justification for electrification of the NCL. Bi-mode capability is sufficient and the delays and challenges to the electrification of CP5 deliverables mean that it is highly unlikely that the NCL will become a ‘diesel’ island. This is more a challenge for rolling stock strategy, to ensure that a sufficient number of bi-mode trains are available to deliver the desired enhancements.</li> <li>• The business case for Worcestershire Parkway has now been made and as the strategy is forward looking, it is unnecessary to include a scenario where Worcestershire Parkway is not deliverable.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7.2 – GWR strongly supports the development of the Task Force but it is not a prerequisite for a 2 tph service.</li> <li>• 7.6 – Infrastructure Conditional outputs should be removed from the strategy, which should focus upon outcomes, and as referenced previously, we are not clear as to the need to reference infrastructure requirements such as ticketing.</li> <li>• 3.5.7 – The tone of this section is unnecessarily negative particularly as the two existing Worcester stations are the busiest in the County. The stations should be presented as existing assets and future opportunities to provide access to the city, and to be a catalyst for the regeneration of the Shrub Hill area.</li> <li>• 3.6.5 – This section needs revision in light of recent franchise awards.</li> </ul> <p>Stratford to Honeybourne</p> <p>GWR consider that the case for Stratford to Honeybourne has not been adequately explored and that the proposal should not be dismissed by the WRIS. GWR are supportive of the principle of reopening the line as it would have strategic value from both a regional and national perspective. We are committed to supporting a more detailed assessment of the economic benefits that would be realised through the reopening and would suggest that the most viable way to deliver the link may be through a phased approach, with an initial phase of a shuttle service between Long Marston and Honeybourne.</p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Worcestershire Public Health	<p>The Director of Public Health (DPH) Worcestershire recognises the value of the proposals in Worcestershire's 'Rail Investment Strategy' that enhance continued social and economic success, making Worcestershire a highly desirable place to live, work and visit. The plan could be further enhanced by identifying and addressing the potential health impact on Worcestershire residents, in particular active travel options when accessing Worcestershire rail stations. The following issues are considered pertinent in the context of this strategy: 1) Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is an invaluable tool for evaluating the health impact of the implementation of policies or strategies and initiatives in the areas that indirectly affect health and the environment. The Public Health Directorate would like to recommend the inclusion of a Health Impact Assessment of the Rail Investment Strategy. 2) Poor air quality is a significant public health issue, and known to be detrimental to health. Public Health England reports that health effects from air pollution are observed at air pollution concentrations well below those permitted under Local Air Quality Management guidelines. These mainly affect the respiratory and inflammatory systems, but can also lead to more serious conditions such as heart disease and cancer. People with lung or heart conditions may be more susceptible to the effects of air pollution. There are 2 notable sources contributing to poor air quality relating to this strategy: diesel trains in and around stations; and congestion caused by cars (especially diesel) being driven to stations. These issues could be mitigated through taking action around increasing the number of electric trains being used, and reduction in petrol/ diesel cars being driven to, and around stations. 3) Investing in adequate cycle parking and changing facilities to encourage the use of active travel modes in reaching stations. This increased importance on cycle parking could help to alleviate the Network Rail Markets Studies growth forecasts, these suggest the County needing a further 1,700 plus new car park spaces between 2018 and 2043. 4) Considering the ageing population which forms an increasingly large proportion of the Worcestershire population, it would be advisable to consider the impact of station design and access for older residents.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We recognise that air pollution has a significant detrimental impact on public health. Switching passenger journeys from road to rail is one of the key objectives of the WRIS.</p> <p>The recent announcement by the Secretary of State for Transport in July 2017 has effectively put any new electrification scheme on indefinite hold. We may therefore need to rely on diesel rolling stock more than we had originally anticipated. However, in consideration of the overall end to end journey, achieving modal shift from road to rail still has a marked positive impact on overall air quality than if passengers instead relied only on private motor transport.</p> <p>Transport mode integration (bus, walking &amp; cycling) will form a key part of any new rail infrastructure scheme.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>This should include planning for and creating a Dementia Friendly environment which includes adequate seating, appropriate lighting and signage. We would like to recommend a number of inclusions within the strategy to increase the opportunity to affect people's health and well-being by encouraging active travel and reducing reliance on motorized transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active promotion of sustainable modes of travel to and from the stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Increase availability and emphasis on cycle parking at rail stations, and transfer of cycles onto trains</li> <li>o Increasing the importance and availability of cycle parking with as much importance as car parking, which will continue to encourage sustained modal shift from road to cycle and rail, thus reducing reliance on private motor vehicles.</li> <li>o Include changing facilities at stations to encourage residents to use cycles to access the station with secure parking facilities including appropriate lighting and security</li> <li>o Dual use pathways for walking and cycling to access stations and reach points of interest from rail stations, encouraging people to choose alternative means of transport.</li> <li>o We would support the electrification of routes to reduce predominately diesel engines</li> <li>o Explicit mention of car share schemes, and electric car charging points would be welcomed in the strategy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Foregate and Shrub Hill station capacity could be alleviated by encouraging walking/ cycling use of buses not just building more parking spaces – it may also contribute to the reduction of congestion in city centre and improve air quality for local residents.</li> </ul>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Cllr Bob Banks	<p>The presentation was of a very high standard. As well as setting out important history and how we got to the present position, a way forward was also shown and clear benefits of so doing were well illustrated. The financing of it of course as well as the timescales envisaged.</p>	Thank you for your comments and support for the WRIS.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
West Midlands Rail	<p>This response reflect the views of West Midlands Rail (WMR), a partnership of fourteen West Midlands local authorities. WMR exists to increase local influence in rail, and to promote the growth and enhancement of rail provision in the region. As a regional body, we are rapidly growing in our apability to positively influence government, Network Rail and local funders as we seek to create a rail network that better supports our economic growth and quality of life. Worcestershire County Council is a WMR Partner Authority, and as such we particularly welcome the opportunity to respond to your consultation given the strptegic importance of the document. It will play a key role in supporting future growth in the West Midlands and creating the right environment to attract and retain investment through the delivery of excellent rail connectivity aims that are entirely consistent with those of WMR.</p> <p>WMR is fully supportive of Worcestershire County Council's aspirptions to improve the County's rail connectivity as expressed in the draft Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy (RIS), and there are no areas of particular concern that we seek to highlight.</p> <p>We were, however, disappointed to note that there was no reference in the draft RIS to the WMR Rail Investment Strategy (WMRIS) that is currently under development, and has been for some time. As a Partner Authority to WMR, Worcestershire County Council has been fully appraised of progress with the development of WMRIS and has indeed been involved in providing evidence to help build the strategy. The WMRIS is being created as an holistic strategy for the West Midlands, recognising that in order to achieve the outcomes the region seeks from its rail network, we must speak with one, amplified and authoritative voice.</p> <p>W MR recognises and wholeheartedly supports the development of rail investment strategies by Partner Authorities as they provide crucial and valuable evidence that we can use to support. We would ask, however, that reference is made to the WMRIS as a key means to support the delivery of the Worcestershire RIS. WMR remains keen to support Worcestershire County Council in the finalisation of its R IS, and looks forward to working with the County as a key partner to create a rail network fit for the 21 st century</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and support for the WRIS. We will update the final version to make suitable references to the emerging WM RIS.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
London Midland	<p>London Midland supports the need for targeted investment in the Worcester area to cater for the anticipated growth in passenger numbers and realise the economic growth potential of the region.</p> <p>We have engaged fully with the railway industry's long-term planning process (LTPP) to inform the development of the recently published West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study.</p> <p>The Route Studies are intended to represent industry-wide strategies that seek to fully involve stakeholders and funders as part of the consultation process. The LTPP seeks to inform Government investment priorities for Control Period 6 (CP6) and some of the investment options identified in the draft West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study for the Worcestershire area are being actively promoted within the industry for investment for CP6.</p> <p>These investment options include investment in much-needed train lengthening and station capacity, as well as interventions to relieve some of the capacity and performance constraints presented by the track and signalling arrangements in the Worcester/Malvern area.</p> <p>London Midland is surprised and disappointment by the stance taken in the Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy towards the LTPP. On Page 4 we note the following comment:</p> <p>'its planning processes do not include additional Cross Country or southbound connectivity beyond current commitments to serve the new Worcestershire Parkway in 2019. Thus demonstrating a lack of strategic thinking regarding the entire network (as 'one railway') and the resultant implications on the entire regional economy ('one economy').'</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>WCC is a partner authority in West Midlands Rail and we will continue to work with them to ensure our County priorities are developed and incorporated into the forthcoming West Midlands Rail Investment Strategy.</p> <p>Whilst there has clearly been some cross-boundary thinking during the development of the LTPP, there are notable omissions (as highlighted within the WRIS) and we would welcome close working with the industry to ensure our view &amp; priorities are discussed, explored and a common understanding reached.</p> <p>We agree that capacity is already an issue on key routes in the region and will update the strategy to recognise this fact. There are 2 ways to ensure economic growth &amp; development – through new connections and / or increasing capacity. New connections provide a greater uplift in terms of GVA &amp; jobs creation hence our focus within the WRIS.</p> <p>We will update the final version of the WRIS to include the commitments within the new West Midlands Rail franchise – including any new services between Birmingham &amp; Worcester.</p> <p>We will update the WRIS to reflect the additional parking provided at Redditch Station.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Funding for rail investment in CP6 is likely to be extremely limited, in part due to the number of schemes deferred from CP5 as part of the Hendy Review, which are now anticipated to be prioritised for CP6. This limited funding is likely to mean difficult choices in terms of investment priorities and the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study sets out a number of sensible options for funders to overcome some of the expected strategic gaps and to meet predicted passenger growth.</p> <p>By fully engaging with, and helping to inform and support existing industry strategies, this offers the best opportunity for securing investment in the Worcestershire region. It would be therefore be beneficial to the region and the West Midlands as a whole if the County Council's strategic thinking aligned with the wider rail industry views on where this investment would be best realised.</p> <p>Also, part of the LTPP involved a specific study into cross-boundary services (that traverse one or more local study boundaries). This was used to provide input to the individual local studies, to ensure that the LTPP captured strategic choices and appraised solutions to network-wide issues. We therefore strongly disagree that the LTPP lacked strategic thinking.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Our statement regarding manual signalling constraints north of Droitwich Spa refers to the limitations on providing additional services.</p> <p>We will be pleased to discuss the findings of the Shrub Hill Masterplan with the new West Midlands Rail Franchisee.</p> <p>Thank you for your corrections which we will include within the final version of the WRIS.</p> <p>We acknowledge that the GVA does not take into account BCR / costs etc. &amp; recognise that such important considerations must be taken into account at the next stage. The priority within the WRIS have been to identify measures that will best support economic growth and development in Worcestershire in an industry recognised format.</p> <p>Finally we will update the WRIS to reflect on the final content of the recently public WM &amp; C Route Study but we do not agree that the priorities within the Route Study are necessarily the best for growing Worcestershire's economy, hence why some of the Conditional outputs in the WRIS are contrary to the industry's LTPP.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>We have the following specific comments on the WRIS:</p> <p>1. The Stage 1 (baseline Chapter) notes the conclusions from the LTPP in terms of predicted growth to 2043, along with predicted developmental growth specific to the Worcestershire region (by 2025 a predicted additional 25,000 new jobs, construction of 45,000 new dwellings and an increase in GVA from £9bn to £11.8bn per annum, with growth focused around the rail corridors in the three areas of Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove &amp; Redditch and South Worcestershire).</p> <p>Surprisingly, the strategy contains no mention of on-train (passenger) capacity, or acknowledgement of the existing capacity problems on services between Worcester and Birmingham, or peak services from Redditch into Birmingham. In fact, there is no analysis of crowding at all. Instead the strategy moves very rapidly into conclusions about a perceived lack of connectivity – without acknowledging that there is a strategic gap in terms of train capacity.</p> <p>This is a surprising omission considering the extensive feedback London Midland has received from passengers and user groups about crowding on the Birmingham-Worcester-Hereford route (which is exacerbated by the national shortages of diesel rolling stock) and the levels of growth that are predicted. It is therefore surprising that train lengthening does not feature more highly on the Council's priority list for investment.</p> <p>2. Table 3.15 (Car Parking Capacity Growth at Worcestershire Stations To 2043) should acknowledge the initiative undertaken by London Midland to expand car parking at Redditch, completed in early 2017. Redditch Station now has occupancy for 196 spaces (2017).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

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	<p>3. 3.5.5 Connectivity – ‘The constraints of the manual signalling and single line between Droitwich Spa and Bromsgrove impose significant performance risks and thus limit the connectivity between Worcester and Birmingham via Bromsgrove’. We are not sure what this comment is intended to mean – the single line sections represent a performance risk due to reoccupation times and the lack of any opportunity for service recovery, however this is not necessarily a connectivity constraint unless the statement refers to capacity constraints in terms of the provision of additional services?</p> <p>4. 3.5.7 makes reference to the Shrub Hill MasterPlan, to be published in late 2017. London Midland has not seen a copy of this document or indeed been involved in its development, which is disappointing given that we are the Station Facility Owner.</p> <p>5. 3.5.8 Rolling Stock Availability - rolling stock on the Cross-City line should read ‘Class 323’ not ‘Class 373’.</p> <p>This paragraph also states incorrectly that ‘the case for electrification is very much driven by the capability of electric trains to accelerate more swiftly than diesels and provide capability for more frequent train services and hence more passenger capacity’. The business case for electrification schemes is primarily predicated on the comparative long-term operational costs savings (including maintenance costs) of replacing a fleet of diesel trains with electric trains. Ancillary benefits can then be offered by electric trains through journey time savings (due to more rapid acceleration/deceleration) and potentially crowding relief (from higher-density seating or the provision of longer-trains).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

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	<p>6. 3.6.1 Check Network Rail route boundaries – Norton Junction to Worcester and Great Malvern (and Hereford) is incorrectly listed as being part of LNW route. Whilst it is London Midland's aspiration that the Worcester-Malvern route is adopted by the LNW route (with an associated route boundary change), at the time of press this line still forms part of Network Rail's Western route, with the exception of Hereford which is in Wales route (the route boundary sits at Shelwick Jn). Again, the statement 'Worcester to Hereford, Worcester-Droitwich and Bromsgrove and both Worcester Stations were previously in Western Route until 2014' is therefore also incorrect.</p> <p>7. 3.6.4 GWML Capacity Schemes – Henwick Turnback at Worcester. Physical works to undertake the Henwick turnback scheme are due to be undertaken in November 2017 with a view to commissioning the scheme in January 2018, which is still CP5.</p> <p>8. 3.8. Ticketing. It is unclear what relevance this chapter has to the rest of the investment strategy. It does not seem to have any context or linkage within the rest of the document.</p> <p>9. Table 1.1 Conditional Outputs – it is surprising that the list of proposed Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy Conditional Outputs does not feature the second off-peak Birmingham – Worcester (via Bromsgrove) service that was recommended in the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Utilisation Strategy (2011) and features in the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the next West Midlands Franchise (which asks bidders to 'explore and set out innovative approaches to improving the offer to the passenger between Worcester and Gloucester and Worcester and Birmingham').</p> <p>10. Stage 3 (Rail Industry Plans &amp; Gap Analysis) – this Chapter acknowledges the considerable passenger growth experienced on the railways over the past 20 years, along with the growth figures estimated in the LTPP to 2043. The document moves onto an analysis of car parking availability but there is no mention of on-train capacity.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>11. Chapter 5.7 (page 64) states that ‘Given the recent transfer of Worcester to London North Western (South) Route’. This has not yet happened.</p> <p>12. 5.7 (again Page 64) goes on to say ‘Worcester Area infrastructure west of Norton Junction is conspicuous by its absence within the Western Route Study.’ This misunderstands the positioning of the Worcester-Birmingham route within the Route Study process. From an early stage it was agreed between Network Rail and train operators that the Hereford-Birmingham route would be covered in the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study, rather than the Western Route Study, acknowledging that the bulk of the passenger flows from Worcester would be on the Birmingham axis (70% of journeys on the Hereford/Worcester route are towards Birmingham).</p> <p>13. 5.10.2 Common Planning Gaps mentions that ‘The Long Term Planning Process and in the case of the County’s 2 largest stations – Worcester Foregate Street and Shrub Hill – there is no specified interest expressed in their developing purpose or regeneration’. A specific workstream looking at station (passenger) capacity was undertaken as part of the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study that prioritised Worcester Foregate Street as one of the key stations in the Route Study area as requiring significant interventions to improve passenger capacity. Both GWR and London Midland have consistently pushed Foregate Street as a priority for intervention in CP6. The WRIS itself seems to make little reference to passenger capacity at Foregate Street.</p> <p>14. Stage 4 – Economic Testing Of Connectivity Options</p> <p>Neither Table 6.1 (Identified Train Service Improvements For Worcestershire) or Table 6.2 (Summary Of WRIS Conditional Outputs) includes the benefits of 2 trains per hour off-peak between Birmingham and Worcester (via Bromsgrove), which is both a DfT and TfWM aspiration.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>The approach to economic testing uses a model that focuses on quantifying economic benefits rather than the typical Benefit/Cost Ratio approach used in transport appraisal models.</p> <p>The key difference is that the economic testing approach used in this strategy takes no cognisance of cost or deliverability, which leads to some selective and inconsistent conclusions (Page 79). For example, faster journey times between Birmingham and Worcester Shrub Hill/Foregate Street are quoted as being ‘challenging to achieve’ yet the strategy does not quantify why. It also states that the option does not ‘deliver significant value’ yet value can only be concluded by a comparison of outputs against cost, which are not considered in this strategy. Nonetheless, the strategy uses this conclusion to justify its exclusion as an output in section 7.7.</p> <p>Options 9 and 10, on the other hand, feature the benefits of calling longer-distance (Bristol-Manchester and Edinburgh-Plymouth) inter-city services at Worcestershire Parkway but it needs to be clarified as to whether this includes any potential financial disbenefits that would arise from the extended journey times experienced by passengers traveling longer distances. Furthermore, the deliverability of these options are likely to be severely restricted by the timetable challenges and whether or not it would be acceptable to the DfT for the journey time penalty to compromise recent Government investment made in linespeed improvements to reduce journey times between Birmingham and South West England (a strategic gap raised in the GW Route Utilisation Strategy (2009)).</p> <p>Despite these deliverability challenges (which are acknowledged later in the document), both options appear to have been taken forward as Conditional Outputs, which appears inconsistent.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>5. Stage 5 – The Prioritised Conditional Outputs (and general comments)</p> <p>As an investment strategy document, the WRIS appears to be too narrowly focused. Significant emphasis is given to Worcestershire Parkway Station, to the exclusion of other strategic gaps within the County. This has the potential to undermine the extensive work undertaken by the industry to evaluate investment options for Worcestershire as part of the LTPP.</p> <p>London Midland recommends that the WRIS should be updated to include a number of key strategic gaps detailed in the section below. We would also recommend that the strategy is repositioned so as to support the options identified by the West Midlands and Chilterns Route Study. By showing that the Council's priorities are aligned with industry partners, this will help to make the case for the allocation of funding in the next Control Period to those enhancements needed to achieve the WRIS objectives of increased GVA and jobs.</p> <p>London Midland recommends that the WRIS should be updated to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acknowledgment of crowding on peak Redditch-Birmingham services and a conditional output to lengthen all of these to 6-car length (the document acknowledges growth in Bromsgrove &amp; Redditch of 13,400 houses and 147 Ha Employment)</li> <li>2. Acknowledgment of crowding on all day Birmingham-Bromsgrove-Worcester services and a conditional output to lengthen these diesel trains and to introduce a second off-peak service (as per the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the West Midlands Franchise)</li> <li>3. Acknowledgement of passenger capacity issues at Foregate Street and a conditional output to improve capacity, throughput and circulation space</li> </ol>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Shakespeare Line User Group	<p>We welcome the approach of Worcestershire County Council in seeking to draft and adopt a Rail Investment Strategy with the aim of increasing transport connectivity through rail across the County and the associated benefits of better links and services with national locations. We would comment as follows:</p> <p>RIS Reference 6.4 and 7.7</p> <p>We are deeply sceptical and unconvinced by the dismissive approach apparent in the RIS related to the potential of reopening the railway between Honeybourne and Stratford upon Avon and note that this position is at significant variance to Worcestershire County Council's previously consistent support towards the proposal in principle. We believe the evidence base that has been used is suspect either in terms of incorrect data, scope, and potential or due a subjective analysis. In the interests of transparency we would like to see and examine the evidence base to ascertain the foundation for such a significantly changed position.</p> <p>The RIS is unjustifiably premature in rejecting the potential connectivity and benefits arising from reopening Honeybourne-Stratford upon Avon, such a position fails muster in the absence of an Economic Impact Assessment and without transparency of the evidence base. The unjustified nature of dismissing Option 8 is further compounded by failure to appreciate the level of passenger journey growth at Honeybourne which is indicative of the level of new housing development in the area that is set to increase further by some 6,000 more homes by 2031.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>No consideration appears that considers the potential economic and employment benefits arising from a 60/65 minute direct rail journey between Evesham and Birmingham which would be possible via Stratford upon Avon. No consideration is given to the potential benefits of mitigating the environmental impact on rural roads in East Worcestershire, South Warwickshire and North Gloucestershire arising from the projected 7,300 additional vehicles forecast to come with the 6,000 new homes if direct rail services to/from Birmingham via Stratford upon Avon, Long Marston and Honeybourne were possible.</p> <p>Further, there is no reference or evidence that suggests the dismissal of Stratford upon Avon - Honeybourne considered the total population from the three rail corridors that could benefit from such a scheme if it were to be considered, this amounts to 910,000 by 2030/31</p> <p>Consequently, we wholly reject the statement in the RIS “8 – The economic value of reopening the Honeybourne-Stratford upon Avon route is limited, suggesting this would not be a sufficient rationale alone for Worcestershire to progress the concept further,”</p> <p>In March 2017 we commented on the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan and would repeat the following elements as part of our representation in relation to the RIS:</p> <p>1. We support the clearer and more robust wording of Policy SWST6 in relation to the potential re-opening of the Stratford upon Avon to Honeybourne railway line. However, we would submit that the SWST6 should closely reflect Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire LTP4 documents of June 2016. The point to this part of our submission is based on avoiding any pre-conditions in relation with other local authorities/stakeholders.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>2. The policy should reflect support and the aim to work with other stakeholders to procure a GRIP 4 Study to obtain an objective, independent and comprehensive report that will enable all interested local authorities, including Worcestershire CC, to determine if the reopening should be developed and promoted.</p> <p>3. An Economic Impact Study should be carried out as a precursor to any larger GRIP 3 refresh or GRIP 4 Study so as to inform on the key indicators affecting the local economy i.e. greater connectivity, housing values, home/work commuting, off peak flows for retail and leisure and potential values unlocked by enabling greater economic growth.</p> <p>4. The proposal has matured to date and we believe is beyond the categorisation of a 'concept scheme'. The foregoing needs to examine, study and report on the potential viability of the scheme, suggests this should a "Scheme in Development".</p> <p>5. We would submit that Worcestershire County Council's comments, as submitted to the Core Strategy for Stratford on Avon, concerning increased pressure arising from significant levels of new housing development at Long Marston should be reflected and thus included in LTP4, these being; "Worcestershire County Council would strongly support the provision of high-quality public transport links, preferably by rail, to/from Long Marston, with a railway station at Long Marston." It went on to state that the proposals for new road infrastructure surrounding Stratford will make the combination of the A46 and A435, the preferred route to the West Midlands conurbation and that constructing a new railway line between Long Marston and Stratford would ease pressure on this route." We submit that Policy SWST6 be reworded as set out by the Stratford Rail Transport Group (SRTG):</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>“This scheme would involve the continued development of the business case and clear identification of local benefits to support the reopening of the railway link between Honeybourne and Stratford-upon-Avon as part of through services to Worcester and Oxford. Worcestershire County Council is very supportive of this scheme, recognising the significant potential economic benefits to Worcester and the Vale of Evesham area, as well as relieving pressure on roads in the Honeybourne station area not designed for the level of current use as well as to the West Midlands conurbation on the A46/A435. This scheme is subject to the continued development of a viable business case and agreement and working with key partners, including the rail industry, local authorities and other stakeholders to reinstate the rail link between Honeybourne and Stratford-upon-Avon.” In support of Policy SWST6 we cited:</p> <p>The scale of development in South Warwickshire, East Worcestershire and North Gloucestershire manifests itself on the hinterland around Long Marston. Housing developments within Long Marston, including a 3,500 homes development that has had “Garden Village” status conferred upon it, together with new housing in Mickleton and Honeybourne make the need for better and sustainable transport infrastructure compelling. Any reopening of the Stratford-Honeybourne line would enable a direct rail service between Pershore, Evesham and Honeybourne with Birmingham. A direct Evesham-Birmingham journey time of 60/65 minutes would be possible. We also comment as further on the RIS: • The Garden Village site at Long Marston is not considered in the RIS. The developer, CALA Homes, has offered £17m towards potential reopening of the railway between Stratford upon Avon and Honeybourne and some £400,000 towards a GRIP 4 or GRIP 3 refresh study</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no reference or recognition of the Gloucester, Warwickshire Railway Society (GWRS) in the RIS despite the imminent arrival in Broadway, Worcestershire of GWRS services and the potential economic benefits to the local economy. This is linked to Honeybourne as any further extension of the railway north from Broadway would ultimately have to be to Honeybourne</li> <li>• The existing branch line used for freight only between Honeybourne and Long Marston is not shown or mentioned yet is connected to the national railway network in Worcestershire.</li> <li>• An Environmental Impact Assessment is pending and this should take place as soon as possible to assist local authorities to determine infrastructure needs, requirements and investment. The RIS should include the need and desire to engage with and run a EIA to objectively determine the viability of the Stratford upon Avon - Honeybourne proposal.</li> <li>• We fully support the redoubling of the remaining sections of single track along the Cotswold Line.</li> </ul> <p>The construction of Worcestershire Parkway, while supported, will effectively be sub-optimal until the line between Worcester and Oxford is completely redoubled. Consequently, we contend that the RIS should state explicitly that the County Council will make this a major policy priority in terms of lobbying and pursuing Network Rail and Department for Transport for further investment to deliver the remaining redoubling of the Cotswold Line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We note there is no reference in the RIS to the ‘North Cotswold Vision’ of the Train Operating Company that operates passenger services along the route between Worcester and Oxford, Great Western Railway. This is an important element in respect of the future operation of the Cotswold Line and the passenger services that are provided. Crucially, the second phase of this vision supports the Stratford upon Avon - Honeybourne reopening, which if realised would assist with the business case for the required remaining redoubling investment. The RIS needs to acknowledge and reflect the North Cotswold Vision.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>As part of our submission in response to the Worcestershire RIS consultation we attach a document “Delivering Growth and Connectivity” and also our recent response to the consultation on the Stratford upon Avon Transport Strategy. We wish the contents therein to form part of our submission and considered. In conclusion, for the reasons outlined in this submission and the attached documents mentioned above we wish to see the RIS properly consider the Stratford upon Avon - Honeybourne scheme. The scheme’s dismissal in the Draft for consultation is highly regrettable and in the absence of clear and transparent evidence is an inexplicable significant departure from previous Worcestershire County Council policy. We request the scheme in reinserted and promoted in terms of an EIS as a first stage with support for further GRIP study work if the results of an EIA suggest a positive economic basis worthy of further investigation.</p> <p>Thanking you in anticipation of your attention and consideration.</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
CrossCountry	<p>Introduction CrossCountry welcomes the opportunity to respond to the draft Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy. We have identified a number of points for consideration and possible revision to the document and list them below.</p> <p>Industry Planning Processes</p> <p>The opening section of the document illustrates a disappointingly negative view of the Industry processes being used to develop longer term strategy. The route studies and LTPP process both seek to fully involve all stakeholders and it should be through these processes that the overall Industry strategy is developed to best match train service specification to perceived needs and requirements. As well as separate route utilisation strategies an over-arching cross boundary study was undertaken and therefore we disagree with the WRIS statement that there is a lack of strategic thinking contained in the process. Future service specifications of any franchise need to consider all needs, regional and national, to provide the overall specification set out by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Forthcoming CrossCountry future consultation</p> <p>The current CrossCountry franchise is scheduled to end in October 2019 and replaced by a new franchise upon completion of the franchise bidding process. The specification for this franchise will be written based on feedback received from the forthcoming franchise consultation process. Stakeholders and customers are invited and encouraged to feedback their aspirations and views and the Department will consider these when outlining the required specification for the future franchise.</p> <p>Whole “countrywide” business case, not localised or regional business case</p> <p>The WRIS document references on page 5 and section 6, table 62, the GVA benefits for Worcestershire of additional station calls at Worcestershire Parkway to either the Bristol-Manchester or Plymouth-Edinburgh services through improved connectivity. It is not clear from this analysis how it measures the negative impacts created by slowing journey times between</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Our concern regarding the industry’s LTPP is that Worcestershire does not receive as much recognition as it should within the Route Study documents despite being on the boundary of two key NR routes – Western &amp; LNW.</p> <p>The comments regarding a lack of strategic thinking relate to services to and from our County. We therefore welcome the opportunity to provide feedback to the next Cross Country consultation process.</p> <p>The GVA analysis is calculated on the basis of improved connectivity for residents and businesses – forming an industry recognised measure for prioritising the Conditional Outputs. We acknowledge that further, more detailed, analysis will be required to develop the business case for the proposed Conditional Outputs.</p> <p>We agree that capacity also needs to be improved and we will expand the final version of the WRIS to make reference to this fact. As noted above the purpose of the WRIS is to provide an evidence based strategy to rail interventions that will directly contribute towards the County’s economic growth. New services provide significant results in terms of GVA &amp; jobs creation.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you to identify how additional capacity can be provided within existing services (train lengthening etc).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>other locations on the network. This is particularly pertinent to the Birmingham to Bristol and the South West flows where a worsenment to journey times risks moving business from rail to the M5 motorway. If the negative impacts are included then the WRIS document should reference which geographical areas or flows are worsened to give a true reflection of the business case. Table 7.6 suggests that 76 “new” passengers would utilise a Worcestershire Parkway call if hourly calls were inserted to the Bristol-Manchester service group, with 154 passengers abstracted (presumably from Worcester Shrub Hill). This equates to no more than 8 passengers per service call of whom 3 are “new” passengers. This table needs to reference the number of passengers who would no longer use this service as a result of the extended journey time to give a fair representation of the proposal. Furthermore the impacts to the number of train paths should be included as part of this assessment. Addressing capacity</p> <p>One of the key messages received from stakeholders and customers during the last CrossCountry timetable consultation was that train capacity needs improving. It is noted that increased frequencies are one potential solution to this, however the infrastructure solutions required to enhance frequencies take considerable time to come to fruition, whilst enhancing the number of seats available for customers is required either now or in the immediate future. The WRIS is noticeable by its absence in the proposed conditional outputs as to how capacity is impacted and addressed. The provision of additional calls at Worcestershire Parkway in either of the longer distance CrossCountry service groups will impact demand on services which already have peak capacity constraints. Indeed previous Industry studies have shown a valid business case for strengthening longer term based on the NR market study analysis through to 2023 based on a likely 40% growth on the Bristol-Birmingham corridor. The WRIS document references electrification of the</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The draft WRIS was written prior to the Secretary of State’s announcement in July 2017 regarding the future of electrification schemes within the UK and as such we will need to reflect on its implications within the final version of the WRIS.</p> <p>Whilst the Conditional Outputs focus on providing connectivity with key regional and national economies, the reciprocal inbound journeys will inherently also provide improved &amp; increased journey opportunities inwards towards Worcestershire.</p> <p>We will address your highlighted inaccuracies within the final version of the WRIS – thank you for identifying these.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>Bristol-Birmingham route as an enabler to improving capacity between these locations. Assuming that existing CrossCountry services have as a base the existing timetable, then there will still be a considerable mileage running away from electrified routes, particularly the Plymouth-Edinburgh services. Electrification is therefore not the key enabler for improving customer capacity and should be superseded by new or additional rolling stock.</p> <p>General Points</p> <p>Page 73 references developing a new approach to CrossCountry fares upon completion and opening of Worcestershire Parkway. The desired output for this is the creation of additional demand through the increase in advance purchase tickets. CrossCountry already offers advance purchase tickets up to twelve weeks before travel and also on the day of travel, which has led to their now equating to a quarter of CrossCountry ticket sales. Given the existing demand for travel on the South West – Bristol – Birmingham – North corridor, allocations for each service along this route will have already been optimised. The GVA approach to determining the conditional outputs states that it builds on the WebTAG guidance used by the Department for Transport. We would expect to see the likely cost impacts included as well as any detrimental impacts caused by extended general journey times to give a full picture of the proposed conditional output.</p> <p>The emphasis of the draft strategy appears to cater chiefly for outward journeys from Worcestershire to other regions. The strategy would benefit from inclusion of outputs to provide opportunity for improved and increased journey opportunities inwards to Worcester. As an operator which has a high percentage of leisure travel the City of Worcester has much to attract leisure custom. We suggest that the strategy should emphasise how this is addressed to provide a balance with outbound travel to other regions.</p> <p>Factual Inaccuracies</p> <p>Some factual inaccuracies worth noting and correcting are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 19 references one train</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>only calls at Bromsgrove in the peak hours. The current service level commitment is two trains per day in each direction and this is currently achieved by calling both the 06:40 Cardiff-Nottingham and 07:10 Gloucester-Stansted Airport in the morning peak. The evening peak is serviced by the 16:10 and 17:10 Nottingham-Cardiff services also calling at Bromsgrove. This table should be amended to show two calls at Bromsgrove in each peak in the peak direction.</p> <p>• Page 31 should include reference to CrossCountry's HST fleet which operates on the Plymouth-Edinburgh route. This fleet is currently undergoing modifications to comply with legislative changes and to enable them to continue operation past 2020.</p> <p>• Table 5.3 on page 54 suggests that Worcestershire Parkway and Worcester Shrub Hill are both forecast to experience significant growth based on the conditional outputs. The analysis for Worcestershire Parkway however is based on a high level of abstraction from the existing Worcester stations so would anticipate at best a reduced level of growth at Worcester Shrub Hill. Could this be reviewed and updated please?</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Cllr Adam Kent	<p>Whilst I welcome the proposal to provide parking at Wythall Station on the Birmingham to Stratford Upon Avon line this seems very aspirational and not afforded the prominence that it needs.</p> <p>I would like to see Increased prominence to station improvements at Wythall and increased services on the Birmingham to Stratford Line which will also assist with movements to the Eastern Gateway project in Redditch. This would alleviate the crush at Whitlocks End which is only going to get worse with the proposed developments in Dickens Heath.</p> <p>Currently traffic from as far as north Redditch is driving to Majors Green to utilise the increased services available from Whitlocks End Station, this causes issues with transport, parking availability and additional traffic on local minor roads.</p> <p>Improving Wythall station would help to alleviate this but co-operation should be sought from Warwickshire to enhance all the stations on this line up to and including Wythall, Earlswood, The Lakes, Wood End and including Danzey Green which would be extremely well placed to serve the Eastern Gateway project in Redditch. Some of these stations would have good options for upgrading car park facilities.</p> <p>Public transport should also then be linked to the chosen upgraded stations</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We will work with West Midlands Rail and Warwickshire County Council to identify what measures can be implemented to improve services and facilities on the line between Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Stourbridge Line User Group	<p>The Stourbridge Line User Group (SLUG) represents passengers on the rail route between Worcester (both Foregate Street and Shrub Hill) and Birmingham (Snow Hill and Moor St) via Kidderminster and Stourbridge (Junction and Town). Services on this line serves stations in Worcestershire from Worcester to Hagley, and passengers from the County also drive to Stourbridge Junction as a railhead for accessing Birmingham. It therefore welcomes the Draft Rail Investment Strategy(hereinafter referred to as the “WRIS”)</p> <p>We also recognise the importance of the WRIS in terms of the significance of the Stourbridge line for growth in employment and housing, particularly in the Wyre Forest District Council administrative area. However the line will be an important access point to HS2 as Moor Street is more convenient to Curzon Street than Birmingham New Street.</p> <p>SLUG wishes to make the following specific comments with regard to the WRIS which are of relevance to the Stourbridge Line.</p> <p>1. Two trains per hour from Worcester to London Paddington.</p> <p>Key observation:- Services from Worcester to London are inadequate considering the population of the city in comparison to other cities and towns of a similar size.</p> <p>We agree to this proposal. However whilst this would be welcome for a Kidderminster or even Stourbridge Junction to Paddington service SLUG is concerned about potential negative consequences of pursuing this without considering the transport needs northwards to Birmingham. SLUG would wish to see easy connections from north Stourbridge line stations into any such new service and no reduction of current service patterns.</p> <p>An alternative means of achieving better southbound connectivity might be the extension of some Stourbridge line services to Worcestershire Parkway, coupled with Cross Country services calling there.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments and support for the WRIS. We do not propose any level of service reduction.</p> <p>We will work with West Midlands Rail to identify options to improve services north of the County as part of the development of their own RIS.</p> <p>We will update the final version of the WRIS to include the commitments within the West Midlands Rail Franchise including enhance, later evening and weekend services.</p> <p>The draft WRIS was written prior to the Secretary of State’s announcement in July 2017 regarding the future of electrification schemes within the UK and as such we will need to reflect on its implications within the final version of the WRIS (this includes the introduction of Conditional Outputs WAB1 / 2 not being dependent of electrification works).</p> <p>We agree that additional parking could be provided at Hartlebury Station but this is a medium term aspiration once additional services have been provided.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>2. Calls at Worcestershire Parkway by Cross Country Services</p> <p>Key observation:- Single change journeys on the Stourbridge Line are unnecessarily limited</p> <p>SLUG welcomes the proposal for Cross Country Trains to call at Worcestershire Parkway but this would only benefit passengers on the Stourbridge line if a Kidderminster- Worcester- Oxford- Paddington service is introduced. Reference is made in 7.4 that the Cross Country calls could only be made subject to electrification of the line from Birmingham to Bristol. It is also stated in 7.7 that electrification of this route will take place in Control Period CP6/7 whereas it is stated in the same table this service will commence in CP6.</p> <p>SLUG supports electrification but is has to accept that there is little prospect of these schemes starting before CP7. This would not be fast enough to achieve Worcestershire connectivity requirements so SLUG considers that service improvements should not be dependent on electrification..</p> <p>3. Regional service between Kidderminster, Worcester, Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester and Bristol.</p> <p>Key observation:- The current level of service from Worcester stations to the South West is infrequent and in many cases necessitates passengers travelling to Birmingham to access services to Bristol and beyond.</p> <p>SLUG supports the provision of this new service indicated in table 7.7 from Birmingham. However as stated in paragraph 2 above the introduction of this service should not be dependent on electrification. SLUG has identified the need for passengers to be able to travel along the Midland Connect Corridors to the South West and previously advocated in its response to the franchise consultation(due to be awarded shortly) one train per hour to achieve single connection journeys to Swindon, Reading, Bristol and the South West.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>4. Improvements to Worcester stations.</p> <p>Key observation:- Worcester Shrub Hill requires substantial improvement</p> <p>SLUG welcomes improvements to Worcester Shrub Hill as identified in paragraphs 5.16, 7.6 and 8.1 of the WRIS. It notes that a Shrub Hill Master Plan is currently being prepared in consultation with Worcester City Council with a view to not only improving facilities at Shrub Hill station including improved access, particularly for those with a disability and car parking but regeneration of the area..</p> <p>5. Infrastructure</p> <p>Key observation:- Apart from the resignalling at Kidderminster and Hartlebury there have been no improvements to increase capacity and reliability of the infrastructure for many years</p> <p>SLUG supports elimination of infrastructure constraints to enable improved services as identified in paragraph 5.10.3 of the Strategy. We are of the view that the main priorities are infrastructure and signalling improvements in the Worcester City area, Droitwich and Malvern Wells. These improvements require urgent attention as they are causing operational difficulties and the equipment is continuing to fail despite Network Rail attempting to extend its life.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>6 Blakedown and Hartlebury Stations</p> <p>Key observation:- There is a need to provide better parking facilities at Worcestershire stations including identifying park and ride facilities</p> <p>It is noted in 7.3 that the introduction of the service from Kidderminster to Paddington is conditional upon but not exclusively the provision of additional car parking capacity at Kidderminster Station and/or development of Hartlebury or Blakedown stations to accommodate demand. SLUG supports expansion of car parking provision in order to improve accessibility of rail services but is not convinced that the proposals are robust in the availability of extra car parking space at Blakedown and the effect on the A456. It is considered that Hartlebury is more convenient as a railhead for Stourport and Bewdley and be considered as a park and ride facility in the WRIS</p> <p>7. Existing Stourbridge Line pattern of services</p> <p>Key observation:- The present level of service has been a success of the route together with Class 172 rolling stock</p> <p>SLUG supports the Rowley Regis turnback facility which should significantly improve peak time commuting. It notes in 5.6 reference to an indicative timetable by CENTRO and the pattern of train services shown in figure 5.12. SLUG does not wish to see a reduction in the current service pattern from Kidderminster or Stourbridge Junction. This is a success of the turn up and go service which should not be reversed. We note the WRIS gives the opportunity to improve services at the south end of the line which we support. SLUG also wishes to see a more predictable pattern of services into Worcester Stations, ideally with two trains per hour to Worcester Foregate Street and a clock face service pattern from both Foregate Street and Shrub Hill stations.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>8. Other considerations</p> <p>SLUG wishes to raise the following additional matters which are not specifically referred to in the Draft WRIS:-</p> <p>8.1 The importance of single change journeys to Birmingham Airport and the desire to improve connections at Smethwick Galton Bridge together with improvements to the existing station.</p> <p>8.2 The provision of earlier trains on Sundays on the Stourbridge line. SLUG considers this essential to enable passengers to travel to work on a Sunday particularly if they are employed in retail or leisure and earlier connections at Birmingham stations. SLUG considers this should be pursued with the new operator of the West Midlands Franchise and Transport for the West Midlands. This has long been an aspiration of SLUG.</p> <p>On behalf of Stourbridge Line User Group</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Cllr Paul Tuthill	<p>Having been on Jury service where there is much waiting around as the wheels of Justice grind slowly-I have been able to read the full document in some detail</p> <p>Relevant pages in wris document</p> <p>P4</p> <p>P5</p> <p>P10-ncll</p> <p>P16 malvern numbers-together high</p> <p>P20 why great Malvern light</p> <p>P24 relevant to Malvern signal boxes</p> <p>No mention of opening Malvern wells</p> <p>P28 no mention of Malvern link potential</p> <p>P30 wonders of SWDP putting houses west of river</p> <p>Rail capacity plans do not reflect this</p> <p>P32 can we not keep a few hs 125 to serve Malvern area</p> <p>P34 looks as if Networkrail want Henwick turnback</p> <p>And us in Malvern to change in Worcester for London</p> <p>Folk will continue to use international of warwick ..and perhaps Parkway</p> <p>P37 intersting dates on refranchising</p> <p>P37 no mention of revenue enforcement</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>P20 – the lines to Great Malvern are lightly shaded to reflect that not all Worcester services extend to Great Malvern</p> <p>P28 – we will expand the section to include Malvern considerations</p> <p>P32 - it is likely that the current HST rolling stock will be replaced or re-allocated. This is a DfT &amp; Train Operator decision.</p> <p>P37 – revenue enforcement is a train operator concern, with a number of complicated factors including ticket barriers, staffing levels and the availability of ticket office / vending machines. We don't feel it is needed as part of the WRIS.</p> <p>P40 – Malvern link car park falls under item 8 – cycle &amp; car parking enhancements</p> <p>We recognise the importance of journeys West of Worcester and will update the final document to reflect this fact.</p> <p>The draft WRIS was written prior to the Secretary of State's announcement in July 2017 regarding the future of electrification schemes within the UK and as such we will need to reflect on its implications within the final version of the WRIS.</p>

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>P40 no mention of Link car paRK</p> <p>P48 Intersting comeent on Redditch in2 camps</p> <p>P57 comment on Norton junction</p> <p>P64 henwick again</p> <p>Although apparently comprehensive and full of facts and history I consider there are 2 fundamental flaws-it is as if none of the authors have travelled west from Worcester. Great play is placed on 2 trains per hour from Worcester to London with the detail of an additional loop at Henwick to facilitate this</p> <p>A much better solution would be</p> <p>To allow the London trains to go to Great Malvern and reverse as is possible at present</p> <p>To accommodate the extra London trains for Kidderminster to couple up with trains from Malvern-this was a feature of steam days and I have seen similar modern practice on TGV in France</p> <p>There are many people who travel to London using either Worcester Parkway or B'ham international because of frequency etc. There are residents of my Division who choose to live/ work in rural area and then travel to Oxford or London to obtain commissions for work. The high tech base of Malvern is key in this as is the attractiveness of the area</p> <p>I strongly believe that the omission of both Malvern stations to the 2 hourly London service is a major omission</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
	<p>In addition the report omits the recent improvements made to Malvern Link station and the potential for a “park and ride” car park at on the former railway sidings –in private hands but vacant</p> <p>NB</p> <p>Another omission, given the delay in electrifying the B’ham to Bristol line is to extend the planned electrification of the suburban line to Bromsgrove to Worcs parkway. This would reduce commuter traffic on the M5 and jump start use of the station. It should be noted that the existing Abbots Wood signal box and an additional crossover would facilitate this</p> <p>Attached are some references in the document that omit or are contrary to improving the Malvern service</p>	

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Wychavon DC	We should not forget villages with increased housing numbers that are on a rail network	Already answered above.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils	Whilst we understand the practical difficulties of re-instating the northern end of the Honeybourne to Stratford line we consider that it should at least remain on the radar in LTP4 given the amount of development planned at Stratford.	Already answered above.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Pershore Town Council	<p>Whilst we welcome much of what is in the document, particularly the intention to prioritise improvements to the North Cotswold Line which includes Pershore. However, the data for daily return passenger journeys depends on a method that is liable to underestimate the actual number of journeys of this type. We therefore feel that the number of return passengers using Pershore station has been undercounted. The data compiled by the Office of Rail and Road is based on ticket sales and as a consequence where a station like Pershore's has no ticket facilities at all, as well as no gating facilities, there is a likely undercounting. We do recognise that WCC need to reply on the best data available but we would urge WCC be mindful of Pershore station's circumstances and how these affect the data collected. Moreover, the Town Council would emphasise the tremendous growth in population that Pershore is experiencing, and will continue to experience, near the station. Given the pressure on the road network that this growth poses, we would anticipate a disproportionate rise in demand for rail services. Although the draft Rail Investment Strategy rightly identifies the lack of parking provision as constraint on access to rail services, the close proximity of many new homes to Pershore station mitigates this factor in so far as it affects Pershore in that all the new homes are within easy walking distance of the station.</p>	Already answered above.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Fladbury Parish Council	<p>I agree with the major points of the strategy. However, I believe that electrification of the North Cotswold line should be a low priority, other issues are more important/practical. The plans for Worcester Parkway need to cater for the dualling of the Evesham-Worcester section, and not cause a major upheaval when/if it happens. Station car parking is critical for increased usage. The continuing situation at Pershore is a disgrace, and Evesham is becoming a car park problem. Both towns are rapidly increasing in size due to housing development. The 'rolling stock policy' of GWR on the N. Cotswold line is opaque. 3 car TURBO trains run through to London, starting from Worcester and frequently full by Evesham, and the resulting travelling conditions are terrible. The future of 5 car ADELANTE trains seems unclear, although ideal for this line (if there were enough of them). The lumbering HST's are totally unsuitable for the N. Cotswold line, with it's frequent stops and short platforms.</p>	Already answered above.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Fladbury Parish Council	Comments (Part 2) The provision of a rail service from the North Cotswold line directly to Birmingham is important. In view of the prevarication over interchange options at Worcester Parkway ( at some undefined future date), I believe that through trains to Birmingham from Moreton in Marsh/Evesham/Pershore should be provided by GWR. This will avoid significant amounts of road transport, as is currently the case.	Already answered above.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Rail & Bus for Herefordshire	Complete lack of inclusion of connectivity between Worcester and Hereford as indicated in the Midlands Connect Strategy for providing an integrated and comprehensive transport system for the West Midlands. Complete lack of understanding of the importance of London trains running through to Hereford via. The plan effectively closes the London rail service boundary at Worcester and does not consider the route to Hereford as an integral part of the Cotswold line.	We recognise the importance of journeys West of Worcester and will update the final document to reflect this fact.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
County Councillor for Redditch	It is disappointing that there is little planned investment in the north east of the county (Redditch in particular). We would benefit economically from having better links to Worcester (particularly in light of the Acute Trust changes and residents needing to go to Worcester hospital) and of course to London. We will also have the Eastern Gateway project which would benefit from better rail links.	The new Bromsgrove Electrification timetable due in 2018 will enhance links between Worcestershire & Redditch via Birmingham. There are very few other options that can be implemented to enhance frequency to Redditch due to the infrastructure constraints.

Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Catshill & North Marlbrook Parish Council	Our parish is a little distant from the two nearest rail station at Barnt Green and Bromsgrove. Also most people tend to go to Birmingham to catch longer distance trains rather than south of the County. So a number of the proposals do not affect us directly though to provide useful alternatives. However improved access to the South-West though the Cotswolds and to Bristol and beyond would be helpful.	Thank you for your support for the WRIS.



Stakeholder	Comments On The Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	WCC Response
Chaddesley Corbett PC	<p>The Parish Council agrees with the analysis that major improvements are needed in the County's connectivity to the inter-city rail network, and supports the investment strategy proposed.</p> <p>The slow speed of trains is also an issue; for example, between Worcester and Bristol. This may be addressed by the proposals for electrification but, if not, then the need to reduce journey times should also be addressed by the investment strategy.</p>	<p>Thank you for your support for the WRIS and we agree that options to enhance journey times between Worcester &amp; Bristol will need to be considered as part of the delivery of Conditional Outputs WAB1 / 2.</p>

**6.12** In total, eight pieces of written correspondence were received from members of the public. These can be seen in Table 6.5 below, together with WCC Officer responses.

Name	Comment	WCC Response
AC	<p>As a resident in North Worcestershire (Barnt Green) and a rail commuter to Cheltenham Spa, I suffer daily due to the lack of southbound services from Bromsgrove to Cheltenham. Also, with my child's grandparents living in Cheltenham, this also inhibits our family contact and access to childcare. From Barnt Green it is necessary to travel north at least 10 miles to Birmingham or University station in order to catch the southbound CrossCountry service towards Cardiff. As a result, journeys take at least twice as long (by 40 minutes) and cost twice as much (by £2300 on an annual season ticket), in comparison with the two direct services from Bromsgrove that currently operate for northbound outward journeys only.</p> <p>I am very supportive of the proposed direct service between Bromsgrove and Cheltenham (conditional output WAB2) as this would provide the much needed southbound connectivity for the Bromsgrove area. However, on reading the strategy in further detail, I believe that despite this, there remains a real possibility that the resulting provision may actually worsen rather than improve.</p> <p>1. It seems that improved southbound connectivity from Bromsgrove is not actually a clear recommended output in the strategy. The headlined "regional service between Kidderminster and Bromsgrove, Worcester and Cheltenham Spa" (as at <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp">http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ltp</a> and repeated in local newspapers) is, on closer inspection listed as an 'either/or' option between Kidderminster or Bromsgrove. This seems to be a significant misrepresentation of the benefits that could lead to respondents being supportive of the strategy without being aware of this limitation.</p> <p>2. Whilst Section 7.4 identifies that there is a choice between one train per hour on each route, or two trains per hour on only one of the routes, I do not see any consideration given to this choice, with the outputs offering only the two alternatives favouring exclusively one or other route. It seem naturally more appropriate to split the capacity between the two routes, so why is this choice not recommended?</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your support of Conditional Output WAB2. As you have rightly identified there are options between providing services to the south-west starting at either Bromsgrove or Kidderminster. Further analysis and work will be required to determine which is the most suitable option, or mix of options, both in terms of economic and social benefits (accessibility). The objective of the WRIS is to indentify priorities for further work and investment, rather than determine the specific timetable pattern of any given recommendation.</p> <p>A new service from Kidderminster, via Worcester to the south-west would enhance the City's accessibility and encourage sustainable use of the existing town station. You are right to note that there are variances in the value of the two options, reflecting the different journey times along the two routes - the higher value being that quoted.</p> <p>We will clarify the text within the report to state that there are only Bromsgrove calls in ONE direction in the morning and evening peak. Apologies for this misunderstanding. The economic value presented is based on based anticipated future provision (i.e. a new train service that is not currently provided).</p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>3. If it is necessary to proceed with only providing this service from either Kidderminster or Bromsgrove, I would clearly only support the Bromsgrove option. Only the proposed Bromsgrove route capitalises on the investment in new stations at Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway, and failing to connect these stations would risk an increased sunk cost invested in building these stations which would be under-utilised due to not having the services required. Additionally, amending the current CrossCountry route between Cardiff and Nottingham to stop at Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway on an hourly basis would achieve the benefits with no real diversion from route and minimal impact on journey times. However, if this service was diverted by Kidderminster and Worcester Shrub Hill it would result in significant diversion and delay and actually considerably worsen the connectivity from the Bromsgrove area because of the additional delay involved in travelling via Worcester or Birmingham.</p> <p>4. Lastly, I have to query the model on which the comparative benefits of the Kidderminster and Bromsgrove options were considered. Table 3.6 states that the current Cardiff-Nottingham service from Bromsgrove is “1 train only calls at Bromsgrove in each direction in the peak periods”, which is incorrect. In fact the service is worse than this: we have 1 train only calling at Bromsgrove in ONE direction only in the peak periods - southbound at 1750 and 1850 and northbound at 0721 and 0757, which in effect is no viable service at all for residents of Bromsgrove travelling southbound on business or commuting. Furthermore, the 2017 CrossCountry ‘Future Timetable Consultation’ proposes to remove this stop at Bromsgrove altogether for this service on the basis of alternative services to/from Birmingham. This change would further worsen southbound connectivity from Bromsgrove and I do not see this recognised at all in the strategy. So, from which baseline provision is the evaluation of GVA/Jobs for WAB2 Bromsgrove based on - the overstated provision given; the current lower provision which may soon to be discontinued, or the future provision of no service at all? Unless you have accounted for the anticipated future provision this then the value of the proposed WAB2 Bromsgrove option will have been underestimated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>Whilst very encouraged by the intent of the strategy to improve southbound connectivity from Bromsgrove, I cannot unconditionally support this strategy whilst the proposed outputs are ambiguous and evaluation method is unclear, and possibly incorrect. I would welcome a response to clarify the position regarding these points and to explain plans to fully evaluate and consider options from Bromsgrove.</p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
MB	<p>WORCESTERSHIRE DRAFT RAIL INVESTMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>I should be grateful if you would kindly accept this Email as a formal OBJECTION to the above strategy on the grounds that:-</p> <p>1). It is entirely wrong that the proposed reopening of the Stratford-upon-Avon - Long Marston - Honeybourne railway line should have been rejected, due to its supposedly low GVA and jobs benefit to Worcestershire and the complexities of delivering the reopening, particularly towards the northern of the route, which are certainly not insurmountable. (see page 87 of the draft strategy).</p> <p>2). This rejection does not appear to have taken into account the major developments in the greater Long Marston area, which will have a major impact in south Warwickshire and parts of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, of nearly 6,000 new homes, as well as existing developments, including the Cala Homes Garden Village on the former Long Marston airfield of 3,500 homes, and at the adjacent Meon Vale, a major development on the former Long Marston Royal Engineers Army depot, The estimated future population for the Long Marston area is 23,000, which almost compares to the size of Evesham, which is about 25,500.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>3). The roads in the Long Marston area are not suitable for any increase in traffic and already the village of Welford-on-Avon, where I live, has seen a considerable increase in road traffic, even before the Long Marston Garden Village has been started. A recent traffic survey revealed 531 vehicles travelling through the village on one weekday morning between 7.00 and 8.00 and 469 between 8.00 and 9.00. The village is used as a rat run from Long Marston area to reach the A.46 and on to the M.5 southwards, and the A.435 northwards to Birmingham, as well as the M.5, M.6 and the M.42 north, avoiding Stratford-upon-Avon town centre and the congested and dangerous</p> <p>B 4632. Welford-on-Avon is totally unsuitable for such traffic, with its two single lane sections. Warwickshire County Council has plans for a Stratford-upon-Avon South West Relief Road from the main A.3400 Shipston-on-Stour Road, crossing the B.4632, at Clifford Chambers, and skirting south of Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse to join the Shottery bypass (Western Relief Road), at its junction with the B.439 road at the bottom of Bordion Hill, which already suffers from severe traffic congestion, in the morning peak. However, the road has attracted considerable opposition, particularly by SRAG (Stratford Residents Action Group), due to the fact that it would be elevated crossing the flood plain, at a high level, and will be an eyesore across the picturesque river meadows and not only that may have a disastrous effect on diverting flooding to new areas. The cost of the new road is estimated at £ 44 million, of which £ 30 million would be provided by Cala Homes, as part of the Garden Village development, and will do nothing to alleviate the traffic congestion, and often gridlock in Stratford-upon-Avon town centre or on the B.4632 from the Long Marston area. Cala Homes have reservations about building the road, in fact, they have stated that “It is unusual for a developer to be asked to build such infrastructure of this magnitude.” “We would prefer not to build this road because it is fraught with technical difficulties.” Not only that Cala, having done research favoured rail, rather than road, but were persuaded otherwise by Warwickshire County Council. The only alternative, therefore, is to abandon the road and divert the £ 44 million cost towards reinstating the railway between Stratford-upon-Avon and Honeybourne. Cala’s contribution would then become £ 47 million (£ 17 + £ 30 million).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF’s objectives.</p> <p>It is important to note that the WM&amp;C Route Study highlights that the particular capacity problems between Birmingham and Bristol are found between Barnt Green – Kings Norton and Birmingham; away from the Lickey Incline and also outside of Worcestershire. Re-opening the Stratford-Honeybourne Line as a means to address this capacity issue is not a strong argument as trains would need to either reverse at Worcester before they went south – adding significant length to journey times or travel via Oxford – Dicot Parkway – Swindon. Again this would not work as this section of the network is effectively full. The WM&amp;C Route Study does indeed promote train lengthening as a means to accommodating growth in passenger demand. Whilst this may require platform lengthening at some stations this would be significantly cheaper and easier than re-opening the Stratford-Honeybourne line and thus should not be ruled out as a short-medium term solution.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>4). Many of the new residents in the Long Marston area will wish to use Honeybourne station, but the station car park is already full to maximum capacity at a very early hour on weekdays, with vehicles even parking on the approach road. The roads between Long Marston and Honeybourne station are totally inadequate, unclassified and in parts very narrow and certainly not suitable for any increase in traffic. Worcestershire County Council has already submitted such concerns to the Stratford-on-Avon District Council Core Strategy, back in 2015.</p> <p>5). As part of the Rail Live trade exhibition in June 2017, at Long Marston, a major national event, which attracted some 6,000 visitors and over 300 exhibitors, a rail shuttle service was operated between Honeybourne station and the Long Marston exhibition site, using former London Underground trains, which are being converted from electric to either diesel or battery, by Long Marston based Vivarail. The rail shuttle was introduced, due to the Exhibition promoter's concern that the road network between Honeybourne and the exhibition site was totally inadequate for a bus shuttle.</p> <p>6). The Stratford-upon-Avon - Long Marston - Honeybourne line was the subject of a Grip 3 business study in 2012 by Arup, of which Worcestershire County Council was a participant. The study concluded that the railway reinstatement was perfectly feasible and would be profitable, WITHOUT THE NECESSITY FOR A SUBSIDY. Since 2012 a rail economist, in 2015, carried out an update to the BCR to factor in increasing passenger growth and the Cala Homes development at the Long Marston Garden Village, together with the company's financial contribution of £ 17 million towards the railway reinstatement, increasing the BCR from 2.03 to 3.34. Although this information was supplied to Worcestershire County Council in May 2017, this has clearly not being taken into account in preparing the Transport Strategy. Arup proposed two hourly rail services, one between Leamington Spa, Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Long Marston (a new Parkway station), Honeybourne, Evesham, Pershore and Worcester and also from Stratford-upon-Avon to Long Marston, Moreton-in-Marsh, Oxford, Reading (for Heathrow road and Gatwick rail service), Slough (for Windsor) and London Paddington (for the Heathrow Express). This latter service would avoid Honeybourne station by reinstating a south east junction with the Cotswold line.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>We are working with Network Rail to explore options to remove capacity constraints in the Worcester area (notably the current mechanical signalling systems) and this should help to alleviate at least some of the constraints south to Cheltenham Spa. There are a number of road and foot-crossings on the Bristol – Birmingham line but the WM&amp;C Route Study does not highlight these are particular capacity issues. They could be bridged if required to address a future capacity issue as would need to occur for the 4 existing crossings along the Stratford-Honeybourne line (Milcote Road, an unnamed road east of Long Marston and then Wyre Road &amp; Station Road in Long Marston).</p> <p>Whilst the gradient of the Lickey Incline does pose some problems for railway operations, thanks to modern rolling stock performance, this is now limited to only the heaviest freight trains and which can be overcome through the employment of banking engines as required. Given the limited number of freight trains along this route, this does not pose a serious capacity issue.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>There is also the possibility of a new station to serve Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse. Cala Homes has promised £ 450,000 towards a Grip 4 Study, however, it is intended to carry out a refresh of the Grip 3 before a Grip 4 study.</p> <p>7). The Transport Strategy suggests there are complexities in reinstating the Stratford - Honeybourne line towards the northlern end of the route, but Arup found no such complexities in their report. The whole of the route is protected, while Arup proposed a tunnel under Evesham Place, in central Stratford, to replace a level crossing, while the two former level crossings at Milcote and Long Marston would be replaced by road over bridges. The Greenway footpath/cycle route would be retained alongside a singe line rail track. At Long Marston an eastern diversion has been identified to avoid industrial units built on the original track bed. The diversion is protected in the Stratford-on-Avon District Council Core Strategy. .</p> <p>8). The North Cotswold Line Vision, which was launched by the Great Western Railway, at Witney in February 2016, attended by the then Prime Minister David Cameron, included the reinstatement of Stratford - Honeybourne, by 2023/2024, as a second stage, following the doubling of the remaining sections of the North Cotswold Line.</p> <p>9).The Transport Strategy makes no mention of the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Steam Railway, which will have reinstated 15 miles of the former Stratford-upon-Avon - Cheltenham railway in March 2018, from Cheltenham Racecourse, with the reopening of Broadway station. Once completed there will, no doubt, be pressure on the GWSR to extend the further five miles to Honeybourne station, where Network Rail has made passive provision for a platform to serve the steam railway. Although the track bed of that section is owned by Rail Paths Limited, a subsidiary of Sustrans, that company is keen to dispose of the track bed. Once connected to the national rail network it would enable through trains to operate to Cheltenham Racecourse station, on race days and particularly at Gold Cup time, which would help to reduce traffic congestion and often gridlock in Cheltenham itself.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Evesham residents can also use Stratford-upon-Avon Parkway to access Birmingham (via the A46 and western by-pass). It will also be possible for residents of the Long Marston site to make the same journey with congestion being eased if and when the Stratford Western Relief Road is constructed. It should be noted that Stratford-upon-Avon Parkway's business case was partly predicated on such trips being made. Residents will also be able to use Worcestershire Parkway, if so desired. A Worcester – Evesham – Honeybourne – Stratford – Solihull – Birmingham service was considered as part of the WRIS economic modelling and found to have low yields for the County compared to other service options such as 2 tph Worcester – London and enhanced North-east / South-west connectivity. These options have been prioritised for the significant contributions that they will make to Worcestershire's economy.</p> <p>14 – The economic modelling produced by Systra, which underpins the findings of the WRIS, has been approved by the Department for Transport and the results are rail-industry recognised as a way to independently assess the economic value (GVA / jobs creation) of new rail services. It is important to note that the WRIS states the benefits to Worcestershire of a re-opened Stratford-Honeybourne line are limited, not that the benefits to the wider region are limited – there is a clear and important distinction between these two statements.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>



Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>It may be there would be a case, once the Broadway - Honeybourne section is reinstated, for a branch line to serve the major vegetable/fruit distribution centre complex at the former Honeybourne airfield,ld site, connecting go the national network, that could help to reduce the many heavy lorry movements in this rural area, including many continental lorries, and help to reduce traffic on the B.4632, the B 4035 and the unclassified road to the airfield.</p> <p>10). Since October 2015 the through Chiltern Railways Stratford-upon-Avon - London Marylebone service has been drastically reduced, due to the introduction of a Chiltern Oxford - London Marylebone service, which has reduced capacity on the main line. As a result passengers from Stratford to London, now have to change by most services, which may be at Leamington Spa, Dorridge, Solihull, Birmingham (Moor Street) 25 miles north to go south or even at Hatton, by one service, an unstaffed station, while the late night weekdays theatre train involves a change at Oxford for Paddington, rather than Marylebone. This situation is totally unacceptable for a major international tourist destination, such as Stratford, and has resulted in many complaints by tourists,. To make matters worse the changing stations often vary between National Rail web site, Trainline web site, Chiltern timetable and Chiltern web site. Even the Chiltern timetable and its own web site often show different changing stations. The obvious answer its to transfer the Stratford - London services to Paddington, rather than Marylebone, via the Cotswold Line, as envisaged in the North Cotswold Line Vision plan. Even Mark Hopwood, Managing Director of the Great Western Railway has criticised Chiltern for not exploiting the tourist potential of Stratford-upon-Avon, as his company has done with Windsor.</p> <p>1). I do not understand why a circular service from Birmingham Snow Hill through Stratford-upon-Avon, Evesham, Worcester, Shrub Hill, Droitwich Spa, Kidderminster, Stourbridge junction and back to Birmingham Snow Hill, has been rejected. Surely such a service would be well patronised, given the size of the population en route.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>15 – We are unable to comment in detail on the potential use of the GWSR as a diversionary route between Birmingham and Cheltenham Spa due to the fact it is a privately operated heritage railway, mostly outside of Worcestershire (with the exception of the Broadway extension due next year). If such a scheme were to be considered again, the apportionment of performance penalties (costs) during periods of perturbation along the line would need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>As noted in our response above, we do not consider the gradient of the Lickey Incline nor the existing (minor) road crossings to a significant challenge to capacity.</p>



Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>12). According to the West Midlands and Chilterns route study, the Birmingham - Lickey incline - Cheltenham line will be up to maximum capacity by 2019, with the only plan to provide extra capacity is for longer passenger trains, which will, no doubt, mean lengthening platforms. Surely only a short term stop gap plan. Possible plans, at some future time, to reopen the Walsall - Dudley - Stourbridge junction line for freight traffic, may help capacity problems between Birmingham, Bromsgrove and Abbotswood junction, but will not solve the capacity problems between Worcester and Cheltenham, or avoid the six level crossings on that route.</p> <p>Until August 1976 an alternative route was available between Birmingham and Cheltenham via Stratford-upon-Avon, but unfortunately, although there were plans to upgrade the line, a disastrous freight train derailment, at Winchcombe, which tore up 1/4 mile of track resulted in the complete closure of the line, south of Stratford-upon-Avon, except for a short freight branch from Honeybourne, to serve Long Marston.</p> <p>British Rail had not wanted to close the line, but was forced to, by the then Labour Government which had, at the time, serious financial problems, which meant that the Government had had to apply to the IMF for a loan to bail them out.</p> <p>The former Railtrack had wanted to reopen the whole of the Stratford-upon-Avon - Cheltenham line in 1999, due to capacity problems on the Lickey route, but another Labour Government forced the company into liquidation and the plan was dropped. However, the reopening of the whole of this route through Stratford would have the advantage of having no level crossings, while there are no less than eight on the Lickey route. The steepest gradient on the Stratford route is between Stratford and Wilmcote 1 in 75, as compared with the 1 in 37 Lickey incline. In November 2010 Network Rail had talks with Warwickshire County Council, with a view to routing rail freight traffic through Stratford-upon-Avon, but the plan was not pursued.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>13). Evesham, with its 25,500 population, does not have a direct rail route to Birmingham, which it had until the early 1960's via Alcester and Redditch, and the only routes now are either via Bromsgrove or Stourbridge junction, both routes involving a change at Worcester Shrub Hill or Foregate Street.. The reinstatement of the Stratford-upon-Avon - Honeybourne line would enable a regular direct service via Solihull, with a travelling time of between 1 hour. and 1 hour 10 minutes, according to stops. I find it very difficult to understand why such a service starting from Worcester, has been rejected in the draft Worcestershire Transport Strategy. There is also the fact that passengers between Stratford-upon-Avon and Worcester, at present, have to travel via Birmingham doubling the mileage to that via Honeybourne. In addition, it is considered that many of the new residents at Long Marston are likely to work in Birmingham and the West Midlands, so a direct rail service to Birmingham is a necessity to avoid residents having to travel by road to Stratford stations, adding to the serious traffic congestion and often gridlock in the town centre.</p> <p>14). I understand that Worcestershire County Council is one of eleven funding partners who have provisionally agreed to commission an EIS (Economic Impact Study) on the reinstatement of the railway between Stratford-upon-Avon and Honeybourne, to capture the economic benefits of introducing new rail services between Stratford-upon-Avon, Long Marston, Moreton-in-Marsh and Oxford (and on to Reading and London Paddington) and also from Worcester to Worcestershire Parkway (due to open in 2019), Pershore, Evesham, Honeybourne, Long Marston and Stratford-upon-Avon (and on to Solihull and Birmingham Moor Street/Snow Hill, with the possibly of a circular service from Birmingham Snow Hill to Stratford-upon-Avon, Worcester, Kidderminster and back to Snow Hill. It would be indeed premature to reject the reinstatement of Stratford-upon-Avon - Honeybourne until the results of the EIS are known. I cannot accept that the economic value of reopening the route is limited.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>15). The reinstatement of The Stratford-upon-Avon - Long Marston - Honeybourne, as well as the possibility of reopening the whole of Stratford-upon-Avon - Cheltenham (Lansdown junction) route as a vital alternative route between Birmingham and Cheltenham, avoiding the notorious 1 in 37 Lickey incline and the eight level crossings on that route, the cause of many problems and abuse by both drivers and pedestrians. As I pointed out in paragraph 12, the only gradient of any note on the route is the 1 in 75 between Stratford-upon-Avon and Wilmcote. North of Stratford-upon-Avon there are two routes to Birmingham, one via Henley-in-Arden (the Shakespeare line), which is double track throughout and that via Hatton North, of which five miles is single track.</p> <p>I would also point out that the reinstatement would also provide another alternative route from Worcester to Cheltenham via the Cotswold line and the GWSR. In the negotiations in 1999 between the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Steam Railway and Railtrack, it was agreed that the GWSR would retain ownership of their land, but would receive rail access charges for use by national rail, both passenger and freight trains. In the event of engineering work or other problems there is no suitable alternative route between Worcester and Cheltenham and buses have to be substituted, which are unpopular with passengers.</p> <p>In addition the reinstatement would provide an alternative route between Birmingham and Oxford, via Stratford-upon-Avon and the Cotswold line. This route would have been invaluable in 2016 when the main line via Leamington Spa and Banbury was closed for nine weeks following the Harbury landslip, with buses having to be substituted and freight trans diverted via lengthy alternative routes. However this route would have been suitable only for passenger, such as Cross Country services, and light freight up to W.6, but not for heavy freight traffic.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>FINAL CONCLUSION</p> <p>I trust the foregoing will emphasise that the reinstatement of the Stratford-upon-Avon - Long Marston - Honeybourne line for passenger traffic will be absolutely essential for the future of the area, and contribute to reducing traffic on quite unsuitable rural roads. I attach two videos, prepared by Arup, showing how the section between Stratford--upon-Avon Racecourse and Stratford-upon-Avon town station will look, with a tunnel under Evesham Place and cuttings either side, together with two photographs showing how the single track line and the Greenway footpath/cycleway might look, between Straford-upon-Avon and Long Marston, taken from a railway in Cornwall. although admittedly a heritage railway. I also attach a plan of the Cala Homes Long Marston Garden Village Master Plan. The two yellow rectangles on the left hand side show the land reserved for a Parkway railway station and a car park</p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
CH	<p>My attention has been drawn to this consultation and I wanted to comment on the acceptability and practicality of those proposals you are making over the services on the Stourbridge Junction/Kidderminster line. I have to say that I find it more than a little perverse that the DfT having gone through a consultation process in accordance with the commitment in the Conservatives' 2015 election manifesto, that a Conservative-controlled county council should seek to reopen a settled consultation and seek to change consulted arrangements for its own sectional interests. My understanding is that the consultation had agreed the service pattern until the end of the new West Midlands franchise in the mid-2020s, and the service pattern (in the form of the Train Service Specification attached to the ITT) was the minimum requirement to be delivered by the Franchise Operator.</p> <p>The majority of your proposals require investment or financial support that provided these come from the council tax payers in Worcestershire are none of my business, provided they are wholly funded locally by residents of Worcestershire.</p> <p>Your figure 3.7 on page 20 of your document has the wrong Snow Hill Lines EWD standard hour train service. There are six trains an hour to Stourbridge Junction, not seven, and there is no service from Dorridge to Stourbridge Junction. One train from Dorridge goes to Kidderminster and the other Worcester, the third train 'via Solihull' starts at Stratford upon Avon. The relevance of the table 3.11 on page 26 and its focus on average speeds is unclear to me, although it appears to be a principal justification for axing half of the train services to Stourbridge Junction. The distance from Birmingham Moor Street to Stourbridge Junction is 12½ miles with a journey time of 30-32 minutes giving an average speed of only 25 mph. However the alternative travelling by car or bus, will take 50% longer from Stourbridge and doubtless something similar from Kidderminster or from Bromsgrove. Many communities on the edge of other major cities would regard a 33 mph average speed into the city as very favourable. As an example, Sutton Coldfield is 8½ miles from New Street and its trains take 20 minutes at an average speed of 25 mph. I see no reason why Kidderminster needs particular attention because of its very competitive rail journey time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. We do not propose any level of service reduction within the WRIS, but instead propose enhancements that will provide benefits over and above the base Franchise specifications. All the service enhancements proposed will need to be subject to detailed timetable modelling and performance and rolling stock capacity analysis to ensure that they are deliverable within existing or future timetable specifications. That is not the aim of this RIS, but instead to provide the economic justification and rationale, from which an informed set of discussions with the rail industry can take place. Thank you for taking the time to provide your thoughts on service patterns which we will consider as part of the later stage timetable planning exercises.</p> <p>Finally, we are considering how best to improve the use of, and access to Worcester Shrub Hill Station, as part of a recently completed Masterplan exercise, the findings of which will be published later this year.</p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>Section 5.6</p> <p>You have got into a muddle over the second Rowley Regis turnback platform. The idea of this proposal is to run two extra trains from Birmingham to Rowley Regis in the period after the end of the new West Midlands Franchise (i.e. from 2025 to 2043). It has been explicitly rejected by the DfT for the 2017 West Midlands franchise as it requires other investment other than reconnecting and lengthening the former bay platform, including building a fully-accessible footbridge so passengers from say Langley Green to Old Hill can interchange easily, signalling improvements to permit 8 tph and possibly a platform 5 at Snow Hill (unless the service was providing by extending the two Chiltern semi-fast services to Rowley Regis).</p> <p>I'm afraid your service at figure 5.12 is completely unworkable and must therefore be rejected. In terms of capacity, peak hour services (currently formed of 3, 4, 5 and 6 coaches) are all crowded or over-crowded into Snow Hill in the morning and out from Snow Hill in the afternoon – the section with the greatest loading being Rowley Regis to Smethwick Galton Bridge in the morning and vice-versa in the afternoon. There is substantial interchange (often a net 50 joiners/leavers) at Galton Bridge onto the New Street/Wolverhampton line. The number of coaches on the Stourbridge line has remained static for many years (69 Class 172 vehicles replaced 72 Class 150s in 2011) despite a 25% increase in ridership. All trains on the Stourbridge line need at least one extra coach added to them in each peak period; doubtless part of the 137 additional vehicles specified by DfT in its ITT for the new franchise. Those trains currently running with 6 cars would need a second coach added to a service immediately before or afterwards. Stourbridge Junction is the most heavily used station on the line with 1,783,112 fare-paying passengers (2015/6) plus a substantial number of passengers travelling on TfWM ENCTS passes bringing the total to well over 2m p.a.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>The requirement for capacity departing from Stourbridge Junction in the morning peak and arriving there in the afternoon would need to be at least five coaches per service early in the new franchise, rising to 6 coaches in 2025. Halving the service to Stourbridge Junction means that the remaining three trains would need to have at least ten coaches, rising to twelve by 2025, even allowing for a short three-car train running only to Rowley Regis.</p> <p>Running services of ten coaches from Stratford upon Avon via both Dorridge and Whitlock's End to Worcester (to provide the necessary capacity) would need Worcestershire ratepayers to fund the lengthening of a total of 28 platforms between Stourbridge Junction and Stratford upon Avon (plus those in Worcestershire). Even at £1m a platform, this represents very poor value for money for a couple of minutes time saving from Kidderminster to Birmingham. Some stations, for example Cradley Heath would need the level crossing to be closed and Worcestershire funding an overbridge to allow the platforms to be extended to 242 metres. Running very long trains beyond Stourbridge Junction into Worcestershire would also give very poor utilisation for rolling stock with many vehicles carry little but air-conditioned air.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>Your proposed timetable gives the following:</p> <p>Snow Hill 0.00 0.10 0.20 0.30 0.40 0.50</p> <p>Jewellery Qtr. 0a03 0a23 0a43</p> <p>The Hawthorns 0a07 0a27 0a47</p> <p>Galton Bridge 0a10 0a19 0a30 0a39 0a50 0a59</p> <p>Langly Green 0a13½ 0a33½ 0a53½</p> <p>Rowley Regis 0.17 0a24½ 0.37 0a44½ 0.57 1a04½</p> <p>Old Hill 0a28 0a48</p> <p>Cradley Hth 0a31½ 0a51½</p> <p>Lye 0a35 0a55</p> <p>S'bridge Jn 0b40 1b00 1b15½</p> <p>Hagley 0a44 1a04</p> <p>Blakedown 0a47½ 1a07½</p> <p>Kidderminster 0a52½ 1p14½ 1a27½</p> <p>Hartlebury 1a00</p> <p>Droitwich Spa 1a08½ 1a39</p> <p>Worcester 1p20 1p50</p> <p>peak hour length 3 cars 10 cars 3 cars 10 cars 3 cars 10 cars</p> <p>Note the seventh train in figure 5.12 is excluded as only 6 tph currently operate.</p> <p>Journey Times to Kidderminster 42 minutes (semi-fast) or 36 minutes (fast). The time savings from running 'fast' Snow Hill to Rowley Regis (calling only at Galton Bridge) are virtually eliminated by the need for two of the three services to call all stations from Rowley Regis to Kidderminster to provide the minimum 2 tph service at these stations. This is virtually no saving over the existing 37 minutes journey time to Kidderminster and this by only one tph as opposed to two in the current timetable. I cannot believe anybody at Kidderminster would regard this as an improvement.</p> <p>Worcestershire Parkway station-</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	



Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>We have family at West Drayton and when they visit they travel via Shrub Hill, and occasionally we need to collect or deposit them at Shrub Hill. It seems to me that Worcestershire Parkway is going to be another ‘white elephant’ along with Ashchurch for Tewkesbury (Gloucestershire), Kenilworth (Warwickshire) and Bromsgrove. Bromsgrove will go from having a half-hourly peak fast service taking about 19 minutes to Birmingham to an hourly fast service with three CrossCity trains taking about 36 minutes to Birmingham, formed with less comfortable 323 (not 373 Eurostar trains!) trains with fewer seats and initially at least, greater overcrowding as the two extra trains needed for the Bromsgrove extension having to be obtained by short-forming existing 6-car services (The two 350 units having long been deployed to London where crowding is even worse.) A better option would have been to extend the existing platforms to 150 metres, allowing longer peak-hour services to serve the station with a new accessible footbridge and car park.</p> <p>Worcestershire Parkway is highly unlikely to be served by either the Edinburgh-Plymouth or the Manchester-Exeter services, the DfT reportedly having aspirations to remove the Cheltenham stop from the former service from the next XC franchise. The only likely stop is in the Nottingham-Cardiff service and this is achieved by eliminating the Bromsgrove or Ashchurch stops. Similarly on the London route, Great Western will not wish to stop the fast services at Worcestershire Parkway if a 1 hour 50 minute timing from Worcester to London is to be achieved again. This just leaves the semi-fast train to London serving the station.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>It appears to me as an occasional user that a better use of Worcestershire ratepayers' money would be to expand Shrub Hill station by completely renewing the easterly platform (platforms 2 and 3) and making platform 3 a through platform by linking the existing bay with the Back Road siding with associated signalling changes. (The existing listed waiting room on platform two could be gifted to a railway preservation society, where it would be more in keeping, as our national rail network isn't a working museum.). There is a huge amount of unused railway line behind the station (on the east side) easily giving sufficient space for a 500-space multi-storey car park to be constructed on the land. Creating a better easterly approach to Shrub Hill from the north by road, i.e. not through the city centre, would complete the necessary works at much less cost than building a completely new station. Nothing in this submission should be considered confidential and it may be distributed freely without redaction of the personal details. Similarly I may decide to copy this submission to other interested parties.</p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
AP	See Appendix B	<p>Thank you for your comments. We will expand references to the needs of Malvern residents in the final version of the WRIS, we will also expand on the potential economic benefits and the likely service / connectivity enhancements that the town could expect as a result of implementation of the Conditional Outputs. The recently formed North Cotswold Line Task Force will consider the existing infrastructure constraints, service options and resultant benefits to then put forward the most beneficial enhancements for the widest range of Worcestershire residents possible. Your comments will be fed into these considerations.</p> <p>The Conditional Outputs proposed are evidence based ambitions which will need to be subject to detailed timetable and performance modelling to confirm the exact service patterns along with the identification of any infrastructure constraints that would need to be addressed before they could be implemented. Your thoughts in these areas are appreciated.</p> <p>Birmingham - Worcester - Evesham and Worcester - Honeybourne - Stratford -upon-Avon services have been considered but, due to the size of economies served, do not provide as much economic benefit to the County as those Conditional Outputs prioritised for investment.</p> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
		<p>We recognise that the replacement of existing signalling and track layouts is a long-term strategy and will not be delivered 'overnight'. We will work with the industry to identify how and when enhancements can be delivered, accelerating current industry timescales wherever possible.</p> <p>Thank you for your editing comments which we will review and update within the final version of the WRIS as appropriate.</p> <p>We will work with West Midlands Rail to identify and remove bottlenecks along lines serving Worcestershire as part of their forthcoming Rail Investment Strategy. We will also continue to promote schemes to deliver capacity enhancements in the Worcester area - either through track or signalling renewals and will lobby Network Rail for their acceleration in delivery. We will pass your comments regarding track and signalling enhancements onto Network Rail to feed into their infrastructure planning processes.</p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
JM	<p>The comments on the Worcester-Honeybourne-Stratford service are unduly negative (6.4 &amp; 7.7) and suggests an opinion formed beforehand without adequate evidence to support it. No evidence has been made available for public scrutiny to support these conclusions, particularly as WoCC are aware that the Long Marston Garden Village EIS, proposes commissioning of a GRIP rail study. Any future studies should use the Arup Stratford Rail Study, 2012, as a starting point and the service options contained within and not the circular service proposed. Worcester Parkway, could support Stratford-Chelt/Glos/Bristol as an interchange, as such journeys have to be made north to Birmingham and totally unattractive. The document lacks vision and only seeks to restore services that Worcestershire used to have. e.g. In 1987, B.R introduced a B'ham-Kidderminster-Droitwich-Worcester-Cheltenham-Gloucester-Cardiff service. B'ham-Kidderminster was 28 minutes, B'ham-Worcester was 47 minutes via K'minster, the same as the shorter route now via Bromsgrove. There was a daily B'ham-Kidderminster-Worcester-Paddington service; Worcester-Paddington was 1hr 46m; a B'ham SH-Worcester-Bristol service was proposed. It should be looking more strategically.</p>	<p>The location of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne rail route primarily within Warwickshire limits the economic benefits its re-opening offers directly to Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Draft Rail Investment Strategy seeks to provide an evidenced set of strategic priorities for the County's rail network as a whole. The Worcestershire-specific benefits of re-opening the route are significantly lower than those for faster, more frequent services between the County, Oxford and London, calls in long-distance Cross-Country services at Worcestershire Parkway or frequent services between the County and Cheltenham, Gloucester and Bristol. This is the rationale for the WRIS's position on the relative priority of the proposition when set against these higher value options.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is not opposed to the re-opening of the route, if and when a formal promoter for the scheme emerges, and recognises that the aspiration is relevant across a number of local authority areas outside of the County. The North Cotswold Line Task Force (NCLTF) has now been established, bringing together the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships, including those in Worcestershire, along the Oxford-Worcester-Hereford route, to seek to bring forward a major enhancement in services more swiftly than current rail-industry investment plans. Consideration of the potential role of the Stratford-Honeybourne route is included within the NCLTF's objectives.</p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
TB	<p>I wish to congratulate the team responsible for the Transport Strategy for Worcestershire Report, which covers most of the current problems inherent in our local railway system. I was particularly pleased that you have highlighted The North Cotswold Line and the need to return the two remaining single line sections back to double track. The prospect of a half hourly service from Worcester to Paddington is one that most travellers and enthusiasts would relish.</p> <p>The single line section between Droitwich and Stoke Works Junction also featured in an effort to improve services to and from Bromsgrove. A service from Bromsgrove to the South West and anywhere North of New Street has been needed for decades now, so is long overdue, but why are none of the existing Cross Country Trains going to call here once the electrification is completed South of Barnt Green and why won't DFT enforce it with legislation on the incumbent franchise operator? With a bit of financial persuasion in the right places, and the will to do it of course, there will be a number of spare HST sets which could be converted for Health &amp; Safety with plug doors and disabled toilets exactly as done by Chiltern Trains on their Mk.III coaches; this could give access to long distance services on an hourly basis from Bromsgrove and Worcestershire Parkway Station in addition to the Cardiff to Nottingham service currently earmarked to call at The Parkway. My feeling is that The Parkway will surely die without it in just the same way as Ashchurch, which is poorly supported and indeed poorly provided with a meagre two hourly service whilst three trains an hour rush by non-stop.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>We welcome your encouragement and support for the strategy as a whole.</p> <p>We are indeed keen to see future enhanced services from Bromsgrove given the County's joint role with the former Centro in creating the new station. You will see that an enhanced south-west facing train service from Bromsgrove is a key Conditional Output for us, as are calls in both of the long-distance Cross Country services at Worcestershire Parkway (Table 1.1 WAB 2 and WPK 1 and 2). The Strategy sets out the evidence for the County's aspirations, supporting our ability to encourage and persuade the rail industry to develop its plans to include these. The Parkway case is strong given it provides access to both Cross Country and London-facing services for the County, together with significant new car parking capacity, more than doubling that currently available on the Cotswold Line in the County.</p> <p>The capability of the layout in the Worcester area is indeed a key issue for the County and is a priority for us under Conditional Output WAB 3.</p> <p>We have recognised comments regarding Great Malvern, and will clearer emphasis on it in the final version of the Strategy.</p> <p>We and the rail industry are fully committed to Worcester Shrub Hill which with enhanced train services, such as we aspire to, and regeneration around the station, can be a very successful access point to the National Rail network. Parkway does a different job, and the extensive population in Shrub Hill's catchment will support, in our view, a strong future for the station.</p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>Why is there no mention of improved services to Great Malvern and beyond from Paddington and from Bristol, if you take a daily look at The Realtime Trains website advanced section it gives performance of every train and with regard to timekeeping Great Western Railway are, to put it mildly, rather less than good with trains running little more than 10 minutes late at Shrub Hill in a Westerly direction being cancelled i.e. terminated. Rather galling for passengers at Malvern stations hoping to catch the return working train to Bristol or beyond and it is just cancelled with an enforced two hour wait. This is not happening occasionally but on a daily basis, sometimes more than once a day at that. I realise the operating problems with the two-way 'single' line working at Foregate Street which only allows access from Platform 1 to Shrub Hill platforms and the consequent delays from conflicting movements, which also affect the restricted access from and to Droitwich from platform 2. In my opinion a study might have been made into the cost effectiveness of being able to use both Foregate Street platforms to Shrub Hill and Droitwich (in the same way they are both used to Malvern and further West).</p> <p>I look forward to your forthcoming report on Shrub Hill station regeneration and the imminent installation of the disabled passenger lifts to bring it into the twentieth century, the existing unusable freight lifts were installed c. 1905! Sadly, we have gone backwards in this respect. The road bridge supporting the station canopy currently has a 5 ton gross weight limit so buses and coaches are currently banned. The beautiful adjacent towering office block has just had a multi-million pound refurbishment programme so that won't be disappearing for many a decade despite most sane people wishing it would just vanish! I sincerely hope you have the wherewithal to revive Shrub Hill Station as the general feeling by a lot of passengers and enthusiasts alike is that The Parkway will kill it.</p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
AM	<p>Worcester's railway infrastructure and its impact on train services</p> <p>Train services between Worcester stations (Foregate Street and Shrub Hill) and the Birmingham stations (Snow Hill and New St) and, to a lesser extent, London/Oxford/the South West are adversely affected by Worcester's railway infrastructure. This is described below. Train information has been obtained from the current weekday timetable. Comments on Birmingham services also apply to services to/from Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and other intermediate stations.</p> <p>Train service problems for passengers using Foregate Street station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of the 104 services daily between Worcester and Birmingham, about a quarter (26) serve Shrub Hill but not the city centre station Foregate Street, thus reducing choice. These services are not easily accessible by passengers using Foregate Street, requiring the use of a connecting service that may be inconveniently timed, will extend journey times and may necessitate a platform change using stairs at Shrub Hill (important for passengers with reduced mobility).</li> <li>• Most services (57 out of 78) between Foregate Street and Birmingham use a direct line that bypasses Shrub Hill. However a substantial number (21 out of 78) divert from the direct line to call at Shrub Hill – using information in the public timetable, this increases journey times by an average of 7 minutes – this is significant in relation to total journey times (to Birmingham) of about 45 to 65 minutes, even more so if travelling to/from Kidderminster or Bromsgrove.</li> <li>• A few services to/from London start/terminate at Shrub Hill and so are not easily accessible via Foregate Street – see above regarding connections. In the event of a more frequent between Worcester and London, as outlined in the Strategy, it seems likely that some/many of these will start/terminate at Shrub Hill because of limitations of the line between here and Foregate Street.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you. The capability and capacity of the Worcester area is a key issue within the Strategy, for many and most of the reasons you set out, and forms the specific Conditional Output WAB 3. Our aspiration is for a much clearer set of regular train services from both Worcester stations. Our Worcester Shrub Hill Masterplan will seek to maximise the shared benefits of our conditional outputs seeking more frequent train services to London, Birmingham and the South West from Shrub Hill together with the major opportunities for regeneration of the Shrub Hill Quarter around the station. Our focus is firmly on the train services required first, and then the infrastructure needed to support them.</p>



Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>Train service problems for passengers using Shrub Hill station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passengers who wish to access the train by car find Shrub Hill preferable as there is station car parking here but not at Foregate Street. Also, Shrub Hill is preferable for pick up/set down by car or taxi. However, of the 104 services between Worcester and Birmingham, only a minority of these (47) call at Shrub Hill, thus restricting choice for these passengers – this may be particularly important for passengers with reduced mobility.</li> <li>• This same restriction of choice also applies to passengers who wish to access Shrub Hill train services by foot from the city centre, because of the station's location.</li> </ul> <p>Railway infrastructure and impact on train services – resolution.</p> <p>The train service problems experienced by passengers as described are mostly the result of Shrub Hill station not serving the direct Foregate Street – Birmingham line, and will persist as long as the railway infrastructure remains largely unchanged. Indeed, the welcome enhancements proposed in the Strategy will exacerbate the problems around Worcester because of the greater number of trains and conflicting train movements. An infrastructure solution would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a replacement station to the north of the current Shrub Hill so that it serves the direct Foregate Street – Birmingham line as well as the existing ones; these are the Foregate Street to the South line (used by trains between Hereford/Malvern/Foregate Street and Parkway/Oxford/London/South West) and the Birmingham/Kidderminster/Bromsgrove to the South line (to be used by the proposed services between Kidderminster/Bromsgrove and Cheltenham/Gloucester/Bristol; and between Kidderminster/Droitwich and London).</li> <li>• The platforms serving these lines would form a triangular station with convenient flat interchange between the several service flows.</li> <li>• Land in the centre of the triangle would provide space for car parking and, perhaps, a bus interchange.</li> </ul> <p><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The historic current Shrub Hill station building could be used for a prestigious hospitality development, eg hotel or restaurant, giving a panoramic view over the city and beyond (provided the Elgar building is demolished!).</li> <li>• The train servicing and stabling facility currently occupying the “triangle” would have to be moved to railway land to the south.</li> </ul> <p>This radical solution would be expensive and disruptive in the short term but would enhance passengers’ experience by improving connections and journey opportunities, reduce journey times and provide a modern interchange station with car parking. The services would be more accessible to passengers with impaired mobility. It also seems likely to be more efficient operationally and to provide the capacity and flexibility to help accommodate the service enhancements proposed in the Strategy and should also improve the environment of the Shrub Hill area.</p>	

Name	Comment	WCC Response
MW	<p>I am responding in respect of services from Worcester and have not therefore commenting in detail on proposals that affect only the north of the Country but broadly I support the proposals affecting these areas.</p> <p>I am concerned about the proposal to increase frequency to London and do not see any discussion of the effect this would have on train delays on the line. Most delays are caused by waiting single line availability or awaiting platform availability at Shrub Hill and this would only get worse with half-hourly services - in the middle of the day that means four times as many trains on the line. I question whether it is valuable for all these services to complete the full Worcester to London journey. Delays would be less frequent if additional services terminated at Oxford or at Norton Parkway as many delays occur in the London area or on the approach to Shrub Hill and these delays have knock-on effects for passing trains on the single line.</p> <p>I am concerned that the proposal to have more Birmingham to the South West and Wales services call at Norton Parkway means that accessibility of these services from Worcester residents requires a car. There is little discussion of the accessibility of Norton Parkway for Worcester residents other than the provision of car parking. There is a need for some kind of shuttle to more frequently connect Norton Parkway to Worcester. This could be a bus but this would be slow and would be likely to start service too late and end service too early due to the need for subsidies. A more ambitious proposal would be a very frequent service (say every 30 minutes and 15 minutes at peak times) from Malvern to Norton Parkway and return. Such a frequent service would mean connection times would never be excessive in any direction. In Germany such services are often run by trains that call at tram stops as well as train stations. This could therefore open up the future possibility of stops at Battenhall/St. Peters, London Road, Henwick/St. Johns and Rushwick.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>The first purpose of the Strategy is to define the value to the Worcestershire economy of enhanced train services, and thus assist the County to determine its order of priority for both its aspirations and its investments in rail services. Once these priorities are established then it is possible to determine the key changes to the capability and capacity of the railway network that support them. To that extent the Strategy thus looks at the purpose of rail services rather than the current capability of the infrastructure. This has led the County to both lead and support the formation of the North Cotswold Line Task Force in 2017 with other local authorities to develop the case for enhancing the route precisely to avoid the performance impacts you describe.</p> <p>In respect of Worcestershire Parkway you are correct that it will offer enhanced accessibility to car users, but with its first purpose focused on doing so for the 30% of the County's population - c. 168,000 people - who live in its rural areas. In respect of the City of Worcester you will see that our train service aspirations include more frequent services from the city's current stations to both London and the South West. (Conditional Outputs NCL1, WAB 1). As such Parkway and Shrub Hill/Forgeate Street would fulfil different purposes, enhancing access to the National Rail network for different parts of the County.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued overleaf)</i></p>

Name	Comment	WCC Response
	<p>There is too much emphasis on speed and number of connections and not enough on cost and competition. All the proposals leave Worcester with only one viable route to London, via the Cotswold line. Opening up the Honeybourne to Stratford line would provide options for competing low cost fares by the future London Midland franchise operator or via Chiltern railways without having to travel to Birmingham. Cotswold line fares will inevitably increase if there is a high cost of upgrades with no competition. Connections via Cheltenham or in future via HS2 do not provide this, as both are these routes are/ will be very expensive. The strategy does nothing to promote affordable travel and this is every much as important as speed and frequency.</p> <p>There needs to be a commitment to a later service from Both Birmingham and London Paddington to Worcester. Birmingham and Wolverhampton get a Virgin train at 23.30 and 23.00 is far too early for the last train from Birmingham. If you attend the theatre or a concert, it's a struggle to make the last train back. Likewise, the first train to Cheltenham on a Sunday at 12.00 noon is far too late. Whilst I understand the strategy isn't intended to focus on timetable issues, this is a sufficiently important issue for it to be raised and mentioned.</p> <p>Finally, the publicity for this consultation has been extremely poor. I only discovered it by accident a few hours before the deadline and would have responded for fully if I had been aware of it sooner.</p>	<p>At the same time Parkway does offer the opportunity for connection between Cotswold and South West rail services and our clear aspirations for further long-distance Cross Country services to call at Parkway (Conditional Outputs WPK1 and 2) seek to develop its role it a key interchange hub for the county in the future for those who access it by rail or road.</p> <p>Franchise competition falls outside of the remit of the Strategy, or indeed the County Council itself, and sits with the Department for Transport (DfT). Similarly fares policy and application is a matter for the DfT in franchise specifications, although the Strategy has set out the County's headline concerns in this respect at Section 3.8.</p> <p>It terms of competing routes one of the very challenges that the County already faces is the attractiveness of both the Chiltern and West Coast Main lines at Warwick Parkway and Birmingham International, which offer faster, more frequent services with much greater car park capacity, and thus are used by many County residents now, adding to the pressure on the M5, M42 and M40. Our focus and highest priority is now bringing the County's existing artery to Oxford, the Thames Valley and London up to similar standards before we look at additional or new routes.</p>

# 7. Media

- 7.1 A press release was sent to all local media and to 22 members of trade/specialist media. The WCC media monitoring system picked it up in as being published in six different places. Examples include:

<http://premierconstructionnews.com/2017/08/29/rail-investment-tops-50million-worcestershire/>

[http://www.stourbridgenews.co.uk/news/worcestershire/15515501.\\_\\_\\_50\\_million\\_investment\\_in\\_Worcestershire\\_rail\\_network\\_\\_\\_including\\_new\\_Kidderminster\\_station/](http://www.stourbridgenews.co.uk/news/worcestershire/15515501.___50_million_investment_in_Worcestershire_rail_network___including_new_Kidderminster_station/)

[http://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/15509701.\\_\\_\\_50\\_million\\_investment\\_in\\_Worcestershire\\_rail\\_network\\_\\_\\_including\\_new\\_Worcester\\_station/](http://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/15509701.___50_million_investment_in_Worcestershire_rail_network___including_new_Worcester_station/)

<http://www.newsuk.com/50-million-investment-in-worcestershire-rail-network-including-new-kidderminster-station-kidderminster-shuttle/>

<https://www.veredus.co.uk/news/worcestershire-rail-investment-surpasses-pounds50-million-19202>

[http://www.droitwichadvertiser.co.uk/news/regional/15515501.\\_\\_\\_50\\_million\\_investment\\_in\\_Worcestershire\\_rail\\_network\\_\\_\\_including\\_new\\_Kidderminster\\_station/](http://www.droitwichadvertiser.co.uk/news/regional/15515501.___50_million_investment_in_Worcestershire_rail_network___including_new_Kidderminster_station/)

# Appendix A



## Consultation Plan

# **CONSULTATION PROJECT PLAN**

## **Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>ACTION / EVIDENCE</b>
What specifically is the decision being sought?	To agree an evidenced based Rail Investment Strategy for the County of Worcestershire
Total Budget Estimate for this consultation exercise (using higher distribution numbers and including all contingency)	£3000
Has funding been identified for this consultation? – state from where	Cost Code: V19410
Staff Resources	Michele Jones Ian Baxter (SLC) Andy Baker John Harvey Marc Williams
Is this a strategic consultation exercise?	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member with responsibility</b>	Cllr Dr Ken Pollock
When does this exercise need to be completed?	<b>August 2017</b>
<b>WHAT ARE YOU CONSULTING ABOUT</b>	
<b>Background</b>	Worcestershire County Council is developing a Rail Investment Strategy for Worcestershire (WRIS) that can be used to inform the development of rail schemes in the future.



TASK	ACTION / EVIDENCE
<p><b>What is specifically being consulted about?</b></p>	<p>The proposed Strategy is split into 5 key stages, designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a baseline regarding the current rail situation in the County;</li> <li>• Assess the scale of growth expected;</li> <li>• Identify gaps and solutions;</li> <li>• Model the economic benefits of any solutions; and</li> <li>• Prioritise the investment to achieve maximum value for money.</li> </ul> <p>Investing in the rail network of the County is important in order to achieve sustained economic growth, increased connectivity and reduced reliance on the motor vehicles. The outputs of this WRIS can be used to lobby the rail industry for prioritised improvements up to 2043, in line with Network Rail's Long Term Planning timescale.</p>
<p>What are the constraints?</p> <p>What is open to change and what is not? This needs to be clearly set out in our consultation material</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure member/political support</li> <li>• To ensure key stakeholder support</li> </ul> <p>Expectations will need to be managed during the consultation to ensure that participants do not expect their every suggestion to be included within the final document. It is expected that a number of 'rail experts' will contribute and we need to be able to give a commitment to due consideration of ideas.</p>
<p>Have we explained our objectives to all staff involved?</p>	<p>No, senior management only</p>
<p>Do staff have the necessary skills to carry out this consultation?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>How will our objectives to consultees be set out?</p>	<p>To ensure that objectives, opportunities and constraints are clear and expectations are managed. The consultation material (including presentation) should include:</p> <p>All relevant information to ensure that participants can make an informed choice. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategy including proposed schemes and priorities;</li> <li>• An explanation of what can be changed and what cannot;</li> <li>• Constraints</li> </ul>



TASK	ACTION / EVIDENCE
	<p>How views will be taken account by whom and by when A contact point</p> <p>The consultation timescales /date responses needed by</p> <p>How feedback will be provided</p> <p>Where to find further information and future programme</p>
DECIDING WHO TO CONSULT	
Who are the stakeholders?	<p>WCC Local Members District Councils MP's Parish and Town Councils West Midlands Rail Ltd Midlands Connect Department for Transport Rail User Groups Highways England Network Rail Train Operating Companies Local Enterprise Partnerships Bus operators Community and voluntary sector Disabled person groups Sustrans Cycling Groups Local Access Forums Local businesses and business groups Chambers of Commerce Strategic Businesses University of Worcester Neighbouring authorities Representatives of older people Representatives of children and young people Rural Community Councils Statutory environmental bodies – Natural England, Environment Agency</p>

TASK	ACTION / EVIDENCE
	and English Heritage Taxi and private hire vehicle companies and organisations Youth Forums General public
How will local councillor/s be informed	Email but with the offer of a meeting if required
What opportunities are available to local councillors to be involved in this consultation?	To support process
Consider now how you will deal with conflicting views from stakeholders / weight the views you receive	To be discussed
PLANNING	
Can you use existing groups and forums for your consultation?	Rail User Groups
Was this consultation identified in your Directorate Performance Plan?	No
When do the results of your consultation need to be available in order to inform our decision?	August 2017
Are there any opportunities for joining up with other consultations during your timeframe	No. This consultation process will be specific and cannot be linked to another exercise. The adoption of the strategy could, however, run concurrently to the LTP4.
<b>Resources</b> <b>Financial</b>	The costs of the exercise will be £3000 maximum for project management and production and distribution of materials etc.
Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation: <b>w/c 3rd July 2017</b></li> <li>• Consultation Closes: August 11th, 2017 (5 week process)</li> </ul>

TASK	ACTION / EVIDENCE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluation and reporting: August 2017</li><li>• Amends to Strategy: September, 2017</li><li>• Paperwork to Legal &amp; Democratic (TBC - in line with LTP4)</li><li>• Adoption: TBC – in line with LTP4. October Cabinet</li><li>• Provide feedback October 2017</li></ul>	
How long before the exercise starts do you plan to publicise your consultation?	2 days	
How long will we give consultees to respond to your consultation?	5/6 week consultation period	
DELIVERY		
Are we using external consultants?	SLC	
CONSULTATION METHODS:		
Stakeholder	Method	When
WCC Officers	Email	July 2017
WCC local members	Email but with the offer of a meeting if required	July 2017
Bromsgrove District Council	Written invitation to participate	July 2017
Malvern Hills District Council		
Redditch Borough Council		
Worcester City Council		
Wychavon District Council		
Wyre Forest District Council		

TASK		ACTION / EVIDENCE	
Rail User Groups	Meeting	July	
RAIL Contacts	Meetings	July	
Members of Parliament	Email/Write	July	
Worcestershire LEP	Email/Write	July	
Parish Councils	Email/Write	July	
Town Councils	Email/Write	July	
Other Stakeholders	Email	July	
Members of the public	Website and Media	July	
NOTE: Hard copies of posters and one copy of the WRIS to be provided to Railway Stations, Hubs and Libraries			
CONSULTATION EXCERCISE		July 2017	
When		Draft Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy	
What		Draft Strategy Website with online survey Letter Poster Feedback document	
How		Materials should include: A clear explanation of choices /opportunities for influence How views will be taken account by whom and by when A contact point/A data protection Statement The consultation timescales/Date responses needed by How feedback will be provided/Where to find further information Data protections statement All stakeholders	
Who			

TASK	ACTION / EVIDENCE
We must include a Data Protection Act statement on your consultation material – has this statement been included?	Yes – see above
Do we need to translate your material to accessible formats?	On request
Feedback	<p>Feedback will be provided via a report of the consultation process and findings. The results will also be available on the Web.</p> <p>All respondents that give contact details will be entered on a date-base for future updates as the project progresses.</p>
<b>STAGE 6 – ANALYSING THE RESULTS</b>	
How will you analyse the data that you collect?	Qualitative results will be evaluated by matrix according to comment type where possible and via minutes of meeting and written responses.

**Prepared by: Michele Jones**

**Date: March 2017**

**Sent to Manager (Project Manager): Andy Baker**

**Returned to me on (Date)**

**You agree the plan as set out, and you are comfortable that the relevant issues have been considered**

**Sufficient budget / resources are available**

**That the spend / level of activity on this consultation is proportionate to the issue being consulted about**

**Duties under Equalities and Data Protection Legislation have been met**

**Staff have sufficient training / expertise to carry out the consultation**

**PLAN SIGNED OFF BY MANAGER / CONSULTATION COMMISSIONER (Name)**

**(Date):**

# Appendix B



## Longer Written Responses

# COMMENTS ON WORCESTERSHIRE RAIL INVESTMENT STRATEGY (WRIS) [2017]

Malvern  
August 2017

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This document contains my comments on Worcestershire County Council's draft Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy.

### 1.1 About me

I am a Malvern resident and a rail enthusiast with a particular long-term interest in signalling and operations. I write this in the hope that this information will assist WCC and our local MPs in their endeavours to secure significant local rail service improvements for Worcestershire in the shortest possible timescales.

I have submitted these comments as an individual as I do not believe this topic should be a matter for party political debate. In the interests of transparency, however, I feel it only proper to disclose that I am also a member of the Labour Party.

### 1.2 Structure of this document

I have presented my main comments on the Strategy in section 2, in roughly decreasing order of priority. These are mostly discussed theme by theme, rather than commenting section by section on the document.

Section 3 then contains my remaining detailed comments on the document, by category, page and section.

The remaining sections contain supporting material I have submitted previously in my earlier comments on WCC's draft Local Transport Plan 4, but which I have also found relevant to repeat here:

- section 4 presents a detailed map, with commentary, on the current infrastructure constraints existing within Worcestershire's rail network;
- section 5 details the key improvements to Worcestershire's railways that should be prioritised as far as possible, and explains how these could potentially be delivered as tactical solutions in the event that sufficient funding for comprehensive replacement of the legacy mechanical signalling cannot be made available within the next Network Rail Control Period (CP6); and
- section 6 contains some further technical notes and clarifications to the aforementioned improvement proposals.

### 1.3 Summary of my key comments on WRIS

1. **The strategy gives far too little consideration to Malvern's needs.** A stranger reading the plan might almost find themselves having to double-check on a map that Malvern really is a part of Worcestershire, given how little mention is made of it in the early chapters and its astonishing complete omission from the connectivity graph diagram used in Figures 1.2, 3.8 and subsequently.



The strategy completely fails to consider the current Malvern infrastructure bottleneck and the potential improvements that could be made to address this.

2. The methodology that has been used to prepare the plan appears sound, but **its conclusions are probably significantly flawed as a result of:**
  - a. The lack of consideration given to Malvern's needs.
  - b. The strategy lacks *either* a clear statement to the effect that the strategy assumes that Malvern's train services will remain at least as good as today's *or* any analysis of the extent to which the proposals made in this strategy might have negative implications for Malvern's services. For example,
    - Conditional Output NCL2 (1TPH Paddington-Kidderminster) could – in the absence of full Cotswold line redoubling – be at the expense of many or most of Malvern's through London trains; and
    - Conditional Output WAB2 (Birmingham-Bromsgrove-Worcestershire Parkway-Bristol) could be implemented at the expense of fewer through Malvern-Birmingham trains and/or as a substitute for the current Malvern-Bristol service).

If the strategy has indeed been developed on the assumption that Malvern's service levels will otherwise remain broadly unchanged, then Malvern too will benefit from the proposed improvements, particularly NCL1 and WRP1/2. In this case, it is still unclear from the document whether or not the benefits to Malvern been included in the corresponding GVA calculations.

If, however, there is a recognition that some of the Conditional Outputs may have to be implemented at the expense of Malvern's current levels of service, then this implies there will be some *negative* GVAs that arise from those reductions. If so, this needs to be acknowledged in the strategy and the negative GVAs quantified and justified.

3. Some of the conditional outputs depend on infrastructure enhancements within the local Worcestershire rail network, eg in the Worcester city centre area. Network Rail's current plans for addressing these are via a major resignalling scheme, which would involve significant investment. **But it could still be possible to deliver the most important infrastructure improvements needed** by the strategy's conditional outputs **via** more tightly-scoped, **shorter-term tactical projects, if insufficient funds are available in Control Period 6 for the full-scale Worcester resignalling programme.**

## 1.4 References

Reference	Document	Date	Published by
LTP4_Main	Fourth Local Transport Plan (Main document)	January 2017	Worcestershire County Council
WMCRS	West Midlands & Chilterns Route Study (Final)	August 2017	Network Rail
Quail	Railway Track Diagrams, Book 3: Western	Fourth edition, 2005	Trackmaps



## 2 COMMENTS ON WRIS

### 2.1 Significant under-focus on Malvern

The authors of the plan do not appear to have correctly understood relative importance of Malvern as the 4<sup>th</sup> most significant Worcestershire town in terms of rail usage. As Malvern has two rail stations, it doesn't appear as high as it would otherwise do within Table 3.2. But if the usage figures for the two Malvern stations are combined (and the same is done for the Worcester ones), the top of Table 3.2 would then look like this:

City/Town	Annual Usage 2015/16	Daily return passengers	Car Park Capacity 2017	Passengers per car park space	Growth since 2014/15	Growth since 2009/10
Worcester	2,911,488	4,535	121	37	n/a	24%
Kidderminster	1,619,928	2,523	224	11	11%	22%
Redditch	1,002,294	1,561	156	10	10%	17%
<b>Malvern</b>	<b>901,244</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>26%</b>
Bromsgrove	619,880	966	251	4	9%	41%
Droitwich Spa	561,908	875	45	19	5%	19%
Hagley	544,318	848	33	26	13%	16%

On this basis, the omission of Malvern entirely from Figures 1.2 etc, and the strategy's almost entire lack of even discussion of potential improvements to Malvern's rail services is clearly inappropriate.

Another example of where the document seems unduly dismissive towards Malvern appear in the first row of Table 3.6, in the statement "...some [London-Worcester] trains extended to/from either Hereford or Great Malvern" (my emphasis). In the current weekday timetable, **61%** (11 out of 18) up [North] Cotswold line trains from Worcester to Paddington start at Great Malvern or Hereford, while **65%** (11 out of 17) down trains on this line from Paddington continue beyond Foregate St<sup>1</sup>. The report appears to give the impression that the continuation of this level of service has no strategic importance to Worcestershire at all, a position that would be completely unacceptable to Malvern rail users.

It is imperative that Malvern shares in the benefits of improved Worcester/London services when these come about.

#### 2.1.1 Malvern's aspirations

From my own experience as a Malvern rail user, the most welcome improvements to Malvern's services would be:

1. faster and more frequent trains to/from London;
2. a better service towards Cheltenham, Gloucester, Bristol and beyond; and
3. better connections to the North.

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<sup>1</sup> London/Worcester trains that run via Swindon and Gloucester have not been included in these totals.

### **2.1.2 Faster and more frequent Malvern-London trains**

Malvern suffers essentially the same problems as Worcester does in regard to poor London services, but with the additional difficulties that

- a. there are fewer through trains, and
- b. for some journeys, the need to change between the platforms at Foregate Street, where the long staircases and only a single, slow lift on each side make such changes particularly inconvenient, is a serious deterrent to travelling.

Running a good proportion of the improved Cotswold Line train service – especially the faster trains in a 2TPH service pattern – through to Malvern or beyond should therefore deliver further GVA benefits over and above those for an improved service to Worcester alone.

At the other end of the scale, the nightmare scenario for Malvern would be a combination of

- i. a severely reduced number of through London trains,
- ii. having to change at Foregate St (rather than Shrub Hill) for the majority of services, *and*
- iii. the trains connected into then stopping at Worcestershire Parkway in addition to all of the currently served Cotswold Line stations.

The strategy as currently drafted does not appear to rule out the above, at least as a medium-term position! Please give us reassurance that this will not be allowed to happen.

### **2.1.3 Better Malvern-Cheltenham/Gloucester/Bristol services**

I can see little benefit in extending trains that have come from Cardiff to Worcester on to Great Malvern. These are likely to be extensions of the current, all-stations, Cardiff to Cheltenham Spa services, so Malvern-South Wales passengers would probably still find it just as quick to travel via Hereford. By contrast, the current Malvern-Bristol trains are useful as Bristol cannot easily be reached by any alternative route. [It is sometimes feasible to change at Hereford and Newport, but two changes make this less convenient, especially for less able-bodied passengers and those with significant luggage.] Though these direct trains are by no means fast, I do use them whenever possible as I can usually get some worthwhile work done, at least on the journeys down in the mornings.

But the current trains are only two-hourly and the first through train of the day not until 0850 from Great Malvern. The only earlier service – the 0649 from Shrub Hill – does not have a convenient connection from Malvern, so all too often I find the only viable option is to drive to Cheltenham and then travel from there. A direct service that arrived at Bristol around 0930 would be particularly useful.

But if Malvern can share in the benefits of North Cotswold line service improvements (NCL1), and a better North-South service can be provided at Worcestershire Parkway (WRP1/2 or WAB2), this could significantly facilitate journeys Malvern and Bristol and the South West, again with further GVA accruing.

(If Cardiff trains are to be extended beyond Worcester, might not Kidderminster be a better destination?)

### **2.1.4 Better connectivity between Malvern and the North**

The most obvious route to use between Malvern and stations in the North is to take the hourly Hereford-Birmingham trains (though there are times when, for some destinations such as Manchester, it's more convenient to travel via Hereford and the Marches line). But Birmingham New St is not the easiest place to change trains, and an unfortunate downside of its redevelopment has been that some people now find it a lot harder to find their way around the station.

Again, if Malvern can retain a decent number of through London trains, and if some or all of the North-South trains can call at Worcestershire Parkway (WRP1/2), this could open up better journey possibilities in this direction from Malvern too.

The strategy does not appear to consider the Midlands Rail Hub proposals contained in WMCRS [P53, 55, 65-67 and 74], which would see the Birmingham-Bromsgrove-Worcester-Hereford trains diverted to/from Moor Street via a new chord to the Camp Hill line, with a stop at Kings Norton to allow interchange. Though this would facilitate future HS2 connectivity, it would be less than ideal for

- a. passengers to/from University, and
- b. passengers who would then have to change for, or cross back to, New St for onward connections

What impacts might this have on the GVAs quoted in the strategy?

### **2.1.5 Malvern's infrastructure problems**

The strategy correctly notes the Malvern infrastructure limitations in section 3.5.2 on P24 but then completely fails to consider or prioritise the resolution of these. It is nowadays quite a common experience, when I am returning home in the evenings, for my train to be held at the signals at Newland East for a minute or three until the one in front has reached Malvern Wells.

The constraints that these problems impose deter train operators, particularly Great Western Railway, from providing Malvern with the quality and reliability of service that it warrants. On three occasions within the last twelve months I have been personally inconvenienced by GWR cancelling trains to/from Malvern because of disruption having impacted the incoming services south-east of Worcester, and I have found their attitude to Malvern passengers at times to be bordering on the contemptuous. On one occasion, my train from Paddington was abruptly terminated at Shrub Hill and we had to wait well over an hour for a replacement bus to be mustered. Had they only run our train on one more station to Foregate Street, we would at least have been able to complete our journeys using a London Midland service, and would have got home considerably sooner than in the event.

I have included suggested options for improvements to address infrastructure problems in sections 5.1 and 5.2 below, such that these could be progressed if sufficient funding for a full-scale Worcestershire resignalling scheme cannot be made available within CP6.

## **2.2 Improved North Cotswold line services**

Notwithstanding its inattention to Malvern's needs, the strategy's assessment of the benefits that a respectable London service would yield is a valuable contribution to the process of securing the required improvements. The strategy fails, however, to consider the crucial question of how the competing needs of destinations beyond Worcester, specifically Malvern versus Droitwich/Kidderminster – should be balanced in view of the prevailing constraints.

For example, until the Costwold line is fully redoubled, a 2TPH service pattern will certainly not be feasible. If there is one (reasonably fast) off-peak train per hour, should this then continue to Malvern/Hereford or Kidderminster? In this situation, achieving 1TPH London-Kidderminster (NCL2) could clearly only be at Malvern's expense – but no consideration has been given to the negative impacts and negative GVA factor that that would imply.

As noted above, Malvern is impacted just as significantly as Worcester by the current slow and irregular London services, and an even higher GVA could accrue if Malvern also benefits from faster and more regular London/Worcester trains. The extent of this additional GVA does not appear to have been evaluated, which is a pity as it may well reveal an even stronger case for further Cotswold line improvements.

In the longer term, if a 2TPH service of alternately fast and semi-fast trains can be provided after redoubling (NCL1), which of these should continue to Malvern/Hereford and which to

Droitwich/Kidderminster, and what then are the GVA implications for the possible choices? The strategy should consider this question.

## **2.3 Birmingham/Worcester improvements**

I support the strategy's conclusion that significant improvements to Worcester-Birmingham journey times are unlikely to be achievable.

Removing the Bromsgrove stops from the Birmingham-Hereford trains would reduce Bromsgrove's southern connectivity even further. The only other stop that could be removed from these trains is University, but in my experience a good number of passengers do use that (but see 2.1.4 above).

### **2.3.1 Droitwich Spa – Stoke Works redoubling**

The prominence given in the strategy to the aspiration for redoubling the single-line section between Droitwich Spa and Stoke Works Junction is not warranted, and serves only to divert attention away from more beneficial infrastructure improvements that should be accorded higher priority.

It currently takes trains about seven minutes to traverse this section in either direction. There are 60 minutes in an hour, so it can readily be calculated that this section can comfortably handle the current 1TPH service and even with 2TPH, which is the maximum realistic service level for this route given the current and aspired-for service levels on the lines between Bromsgrove and Birmingham, this would still utilise under 50% of the line's capacity.

Redoubling this line would be expensive as the original bridge over the Bromsgrove Road in Droitwich was replaced with a narrower one shortly after it was singled in 1969, and this newer bridge cannot accommodate two tracks: it would have to be either widened or replaced.

This proposal is therefore very unlikely to offer a good cost:benefit ratio.

### **2.3.2 Birmingham-Kidderminster capacity and journey times**

The principal cause of slow Kidderminster-Snow Hill timings is the frequent calls at intermediate stations north-east of Stourbridge. The capacity on this route, meanwhile, is significantly constrained by the 6TPH service over the same section.

Of these 6TPH,

- 4TPH run to/from Kidderminster or beyond, and call at Cradley, Rowley Regis, Smethwick GB, The Hawthorns and Jewellery Quarter between Stourbridge and Snow Hill.
- The other 2TPH run to/from Stourbridge only, and call at all stations – the ones listed above plus Lye, Old Hill and Langley Green.

The WMCRS plan for running short-distance stoppers to Rowley Regis only – an *additional* 2TPH to the existing services (see WMCRS P47) is only likely to enable either

- the Worcester trains to skip Rowley Regis, The Hawthorns and Jewellery Quarter – they would still need to call at Cradley (to maintain its existing service level) and Smethwick GB (this is a valuable interchange); or
- possibly freeing up an extra path for a 1TPH Marylebone-Kidderminster service.

## **2.4 [Birmingham and] Worcestershire to Cheltenham and beyond**

WAB1 could be achieved simply by extending either or both of the 2TPH that currently run between Kidderminster and Worcester southwards. But, assuming the 1TPH Birmingham-Hereford trains are continued, 2TPH both routed via Bromsgrove (WAB2) would only be feasible if these trains terminated there without continuing towards Birmingham, which its current track and signalling does not provide

for. There would almost certainly not be capacity to accommodate two additional trains on this route north of Kings Norton (see 2.1.4 above and 4.1 below) unless/until the very ambitious but longer-term improvement scheme mooted in Figure 5.18 (P74) of WMCRS can be delivered.

Even 1TPH via Bromsgrove is likely to be difficult without some curtailing of peak-hour Birmingham-Malvern/Hereford trains, which are already more frequent than hourly.

An additional 1TPH via Kidderminster, if combined with an additional 1TPH Paddington-Kidderminster (NCL2), would certainly require additional signalling between Tunnel Jn and Droitwich Spa (see section 4 below). This could almost certainly be achieved without electrification.

Swindon or Cardiff to Kidderminster would be interesting alternatives – either would provide a range of useful connections, including at Cheltenham Spa for Bristol and beyond and at Droitwich Spa for Bromsgrove.

The Abbotswood Jn constraint is merely that it's a "single-lead" junction, ie there is a short section of single track immediately following the turnout. All this means is that trains cannot both enter and leave the branch to Norton Jn simultaneously. Though a full double junction would not be inordinately expensive to restore, it only takes each train 2-3 minutes to traverse the junction so there is still plenty of capacity in the current layout to accommodate the aspired-for services here.

It could, however, be beneficial if the 30mph speed limit along the chord between Norton Jn and Abbotswood Jn could be increased.

## **2.5 South of Redditch**

What a pity so much of the trackbed of the former Redditch-Evesham line has been built on!

Stopping the Birmingham-Hereford trains at an additional station such as Barnt Green would slow these down even further.

At least the Bromsgrove cross-city extension will allow changes at Barnt Green between Redditch and Bromsgrove trains.

## **2.6 Birmingham to Evesham**

The report does not appear to consider or evaluate the possibility of a Birmingham-Worcester-Evesham service.

Though redoubling of Norton Junction-Evesham is an obvious prerequisite for this, once the redoubling has been done this service could readily be overlaid even onto a 2TPH Worcester-London service.

If the redoubling project does not include a crossover at Evesham, these trains could still continue to Honeybourne and reverse from there.

If reinstatement of the line between Stratford-upon-Avon and Long Marston also comes to fruition then a circular Birmingham-Worcester-Evesham-Stratford-Birmingham service would be an interesting possibility.

## **2.7 Availability of infrastructure improvement funding**

I concur with the strategy's realism about the difficulties likely to be faced in securing rail infrastructure improvement funding. It is for precisely this reason that WCC will need to be very focussed in terms of which improvements it pushes for, and in what priority order.

Network Rail (NR) recognise that the current Worcestershire layouts and signalling are not up to modern-day expectations, being based on mechanical signalling. They have therefore planned a Worcester Area Resignalling Scheme (WARS) to replace all of the existing mechanical signalling, and the remaining Worcestershire signal boxes<sup>2</sup>, with modern technology, and to centralise control into a major control centre and include a full package of infrastructure improvements (see WMCRS P71). The comprehensive nature of WARS, however, means it will require significant funding, which may not be readily available in the economic climate of the next few years.

But *it is not essential to replace* all of Worcestershire's legacy mechanical signalling installations in order to deliver a local rail infrastructure fit for meeting Worcestershire's aspirations and the WRIS conditional outputs. NR have carried out significant refurbishment, including completely re-wiring several signalboxes, to the Worcestershire installations. Even while retaining mechanical signalling, NR have demonstrated on several recent occasions that changes and improvements can still be made where there is a need for it, for example recently

- i. at Moreton-in-Marsh, when the central section of the Cotswold Line was redoubled;
- ii. at Malvern Wells, when the track was relaid and the layout and signalling altered to facilitate easier point maintenance;
- iii. at Hereford, where new reversing moves from Platforms 1 and 2 have been provided; and
- iv. at Henwick for the forthcoming turnback siding reinstatement.

If sufficient funding for the full WARS implementation is not available within the timescales necessary to meet Worcestershire's aspirations and deliver the WRIS conditional outputs, eg in CP6, WCC should be prepared to push for smaller-scale tactical improvements within CP6 to address the most important improvements the county needs, on the basis of these being staging works towards the full WARS implementation. To this end, the specific infrastructure improvements that will benefit Worcestershire's train services most significantly are the following:

No	Improvement	Benefits
<b>1</b>	Reinstate the former Rainbow Hill Junction and flexible, double-track running between Tunnel Junction and Henwick <sup>3</sup> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better service through Foregate St made possible by elimination of conflicting moves and the consequent congestion.</li> <li>• Ability of trains from Birmingham to call at Foregate St and then continue to Shrub Hill or beyond.</li> <li>• Key enabler for any significant service frequency increases.</li> <li>• Improved timetable resilience at times of disruption.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	Improve Malvern's layout and signalling by providing a new crossover at Great Malvern and intermediate signals between Malvern Wells and Newland East.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes the need for trains terminating at Great Malvern to continue to Malvern Wells for reversal, thus improving rolling stock utilisation.</li> <li>• Would allow trains to be more closely spaced when appropriate.</li> <li>• Improved timetable resilience at times of disruption.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	Redouble the remaining Cotswold Line single-line sections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key enabler for a 2TPH service for NCL1.</li> <li>• Would allow trains to be more closely spaced when appropriate.</li> <li>• Would allow a Birmingham-Evesham service to be overlaid even on a 2TPH Cotswold line timetable.</li> <li>• Improved timetable resilience at times of disruption.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Norton Jn, Worcester SH Station, Tunnel Jn, Henwick, Newland East and Malvern Wells.

<sup>3</sup> But there would **not** be sufficient justification for redoubling the short chord that would then remain between Rainbow Hill Junction and Shrub Hill – this is not even included in the WARS plan.

No	Improvement	Benefits
4	Shrub Hill resignalling to allow trains from the south to arrive into Platforms 2 or 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better service through Shrub Hill made possible by elimination of conflicting moves and the consequent congestion.</li> <li>Improved timetable resilience at times of disruption.</li> </ul>

I have included outline suggestions for tactical improvements (1)-(3) above in section 5 below.

### 3 POINTS OF DETAIL

#### 3.1 Minor comments

Location	Item	Comments
P73	Table 16, row 6	Advance tickets are a double-edged sword, and an inconvenience for those like me who often need to travel at short notice as we then find that too many of the seats on the trains have been pre-reserved. What we really need is more competitive walk-on fares.

#### 3.2 Factual errors

Location	Item	Comments
P20	Figure 3.7	Incorrectly shows 7tph between Stourbridge and Birmingham
P24		The phrase "(fringes to Evesham ... and Gloucester)": a. should be against <b>Norton Junction</b> signal box, not <b>Henwick</b> ; and b. is slightly out of date – the second fringe is now to <b>WMSC</b> , no longer <b>Gloucester</b> .
P24		2 <sup>nd</sup> bullet on right: there is an Intermediate Block signal on the southbound (Up) line between Droitwich Spa and Tunnel Junction, so two trains can be on this section in that direction. One is correct for the northbound (Down) line.
P24		2 <sup>nd</sup> bullet on right: the actual distance between Newland East and Malvern Wells is 3 miles, 71 chains [Quail]
P25	Figure 3.10	There is now a significant stretch of double-track through Alvechurch. The line from Malvern Wells towards Ledbury is single-track. Modern signalling extends south from Kidderminster to barely a mile north of Droitwich.
P40	4.2.2	1 <sup>st</sup> para: Bromsgrove is on the Birmingham-Gloucester/Hereford line, not the Kidderminster line.
P48	4.3.4	1 <sup>st</sup> bullet: Great Malvern already has step-free access to both platforms.

#### 3.3 Typos, terminology and other document production issues

Location	Item	Comments
P7 <i>et seq</i>	1.3	"...manual signalling..." should read "... <u>mechanical</u> signalling..." – the latter is the standard term, and there are no fully automated signalling systems anyway.
P7	1.5	Para 2: ditto.
P11	Figure 1.2	If you are aiming to use National Rail station acronyms on this diagram wherever appropriate, then Birmingham International is BHI, not BIA.
P25	Figure 3.10	Captions: it is not correct to use the term "digital signalling". "Power" or "Modern" would be more appropriate adjectives (there is currently no standard industry term to describe all the variations of non-mechanical signalling).



<b>Location</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Comments</b>
P42	Para 2	Assuming the intended service pattern is as described in Figure 7.5 on P80, then the 'stopper' should correctly be described as 'semi-fast' – not 'all stations' as the latter would also imply calls at Combe, Finstock, Ascott and Shipton.
P76	Para after 1 <sup>st</sup> bullet	I didn't understand what "date exists from the Worcestershire Parkway scheme" meant – should it have read "data exists..."?
P83	Penultimate para	Remove commas before and after "such as Kidderminster".



#### 4 CURRENT RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE SHOWING HOTSPOT LOCATIONS

The following diagram shows the current rail network, highlighting its capacity constraints and bottlenecks:

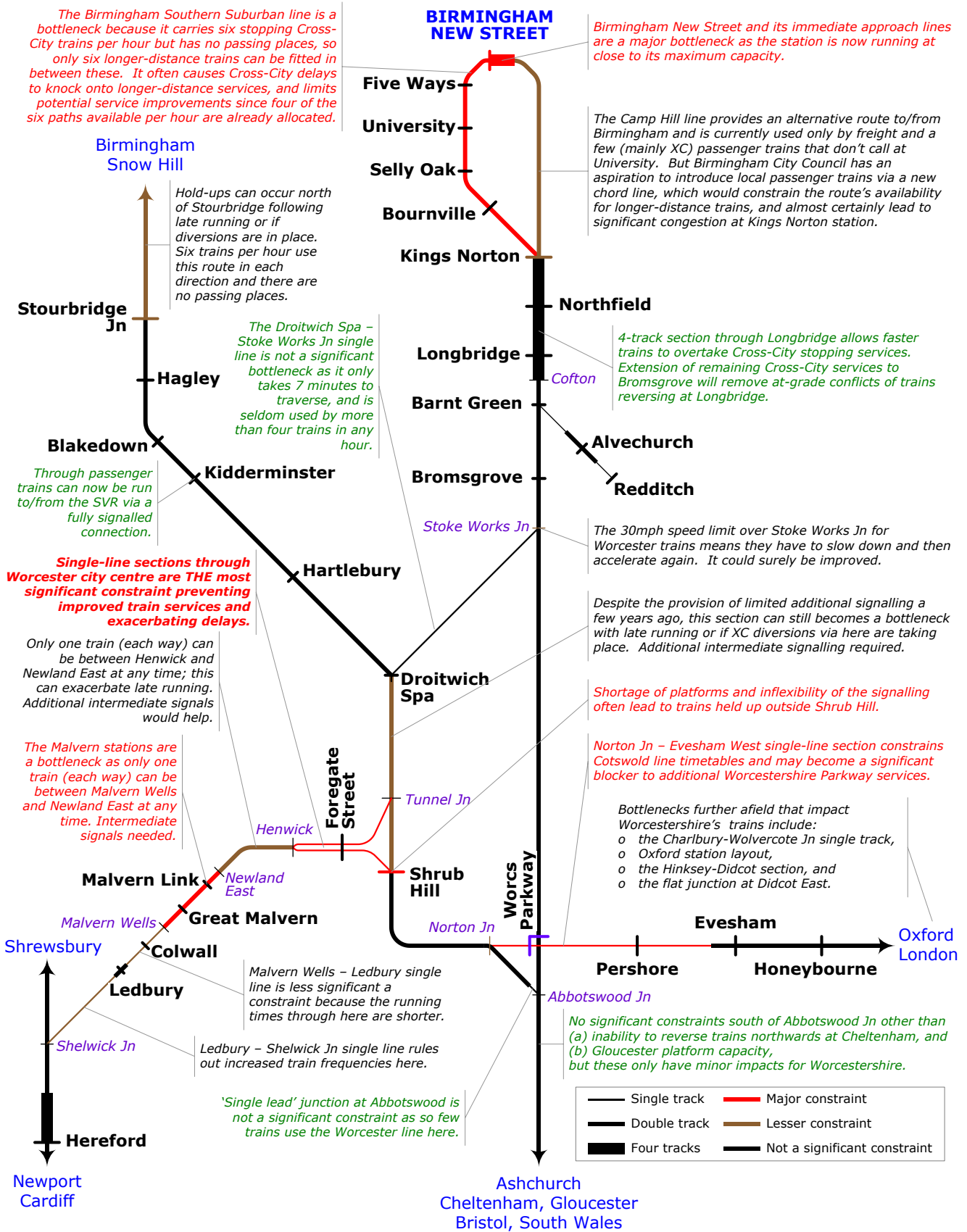


Figure 1 – Worcestershire rail infrastructure

## 4.1 Kings Norton to Birmingham New Street

Though beyond the Worcestershire county boundary, the constraints and aspirations that apply to the lines north of Kings Norton significantly constrain the number of TPH that could be run between Birmingham New Street and the Worcestershire stations south from Bromsgrove (inclusive). Trains to Worcestershire are but one of several groups that may end up contending for the finite capacity of these lines in the near future.

There are two routes between Kings Norton and Birmingham New Street:

- the passenger line via Bourneville, Selly Oak, University and Five Ways, known historically as the Birmingham South Suburban Line. This is a double-track route with no passing places. It currently carries a 6TPH all-stations Cross-City service (3TPH of which currently terminate at Longbridge but will soon be extended to Bromsgrove), with the effect that only a further 6TPH of longer-distance trains can be fitted into the gaps between the Cross-City ones. Four of these TPH are currently used northbound, and three southbound, by the current Birmingham-Bristol (2TPH), Nottingham-Cardiff (1TPH) and Birmingham-Hereford (1TPH) services. The last two of these trains make calls at University, which is a popular destination. There is, just, sufficient capacity at present to add up to two additional Birmingham-Worcester (city centre or Worcestershire Parkway) trains onto this route, though it is unlikely that the lines south of Kings Norton could accommodate more than one additional TPH without significantly impacting freight services.
- The Camp Hill line via Moseley, which is used for both passenger and freight services. The passenger trains are mostly XC Birmingham-Bristol trains, with one of the hourly southbound services commonly using this route – trains routed this way cannot serve University. Though this line currently has no intermediate stations or local train services, Birmingham City Council has an aspiration to build a new connecting line into Moor Street station, (re-)open some stations along it, and run new local services to Kings Norton. This would probably constrain its capacity for other additional services just as the Cross-City trains currently do to the Birmingham South Suburban line, and would also create a bottleneck at Kings Norton station unless a new platform line could be fitted in.

The long-term vision proposed for this route in WMCRS (P46, 55 and 74) includes provision of new flyovers between Barnt Green and Kings Norton that would give full grade separation between the Cross-City line and the longer-distance services, assuming the latter were diverted either to Moor St or to New St via the Camp Hill line. A complementary proposal is to divert freight traffic away from this route by re-opening the Stourbridge-Walsall line and running the freights via Abbotswood Junction, Norton Junction, Worcester, Droitwich and Kidderminster. Only these major projects would be able to deliver any significant capacity increases on this section.

## 5 POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

Within the current Worcestershire infrastructure, the principal constraints that prevent or severely limit potential service improvements have been identified in section 2.7 and on Figure 1 above:

1. the Worcester city single-line sections,
2. the Malvern stations,
3. the remaining Cotswold Line single line sections, including from Norton Jn to Evesham, and
4. the lack of flexibility for trains arriving into Shrub Hill, especially from the south.

The following subsections contain outline plans giving the key details for tactical schemes which could probably be implemented to address the most urgent of the Worcestershire rail bottlenecks short of full delivery of the comprehensive WARS transformation. These proposals will require feasibility

validation and costing by a professional signalling engineer, but I nevertheless hope they may serve as a useful starting point for discussions..

Section 5.1 proposes a scheme to address the Worcester city-centre single lines bottleneck by reinstating the former Rainbow Hill Junction but with otherwise as limited an impact as possible on the existing layout and signalling arrangements.

*A key additional benefit that would accrue from this proposal would be the ability to run trains from Birmingham first to Foregate Street and then on to Shrub Hill, and via the same route in the opposite direction* (currently trains from Birmingham which call at both Worcester stations must go to Shrub Hill first). One way this could be used would be for LM Snow Hill line trains that turn round at Worcester to run from Droitwich to Foregate St to Shrub Hill and then directly back to Droitwich, or Droitwich-Shrub Hill-Foregate St-Droitwich. Another possibility would be to allow Birmingham-Worcester trains to call at Foregate St and then continue to Worcestershire Parkway.

Section 5.2 presents options to address the Malvern bottleneck and allow trains that terminate at Great Malvern to run directly into the up (Worcester-bound) platform there. *This could significantly improve rolling stock utilisation*, as the trip to Malvern Wells and back typically takes about 15 minutes – sometimes longer depending on what other trains are in the area at the time – whereas a typical minimum allowance for reversing directly from a station platform is just 4 minutes.

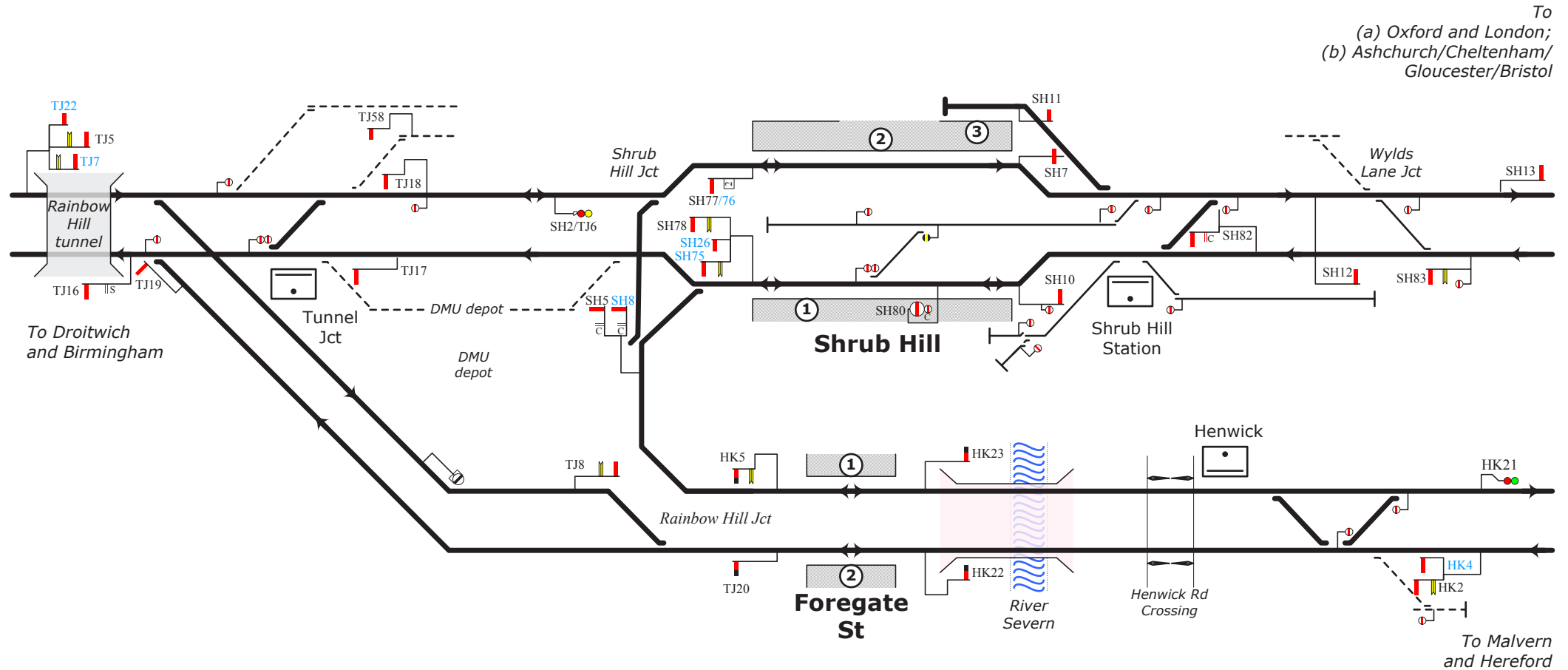
Section 5.3 presents some possible improvements to the Norton Jn – Evesham single line signalling which offer potential benefits for enabling Worcestershire Parkway service improvements in the event that the budget for redoubling cannot be obtained in the short/medium term. Their initial focus is to address the limitations that the current signalling imposes on the ability to run additional trains to Worcestershire Parkway from the city centre stations. One of the options, however, would also reduce headways for consecutive trains running in the same direction between Worcester and Evesham, which could offer additional benefits for through running if Stratford – Long Marston – Honeybourne reopening does happen.

Finally, in addition to these three specific areas for which I have included more detailed proposals, the following further improvement scheme is also likely to be needed for NCL2 and/or WAB1:

5. Providing further additional signals between Tunnel Jn and Droitwich Spa (convert this to a Track-Circuit Block section with intermediate signals about every mile, as done on the Kidderminster line when it was resignalled.) This enable an increased service patter between Worcester and Droitwich and reduce the delays that already occur on this section after late running or if XC trains are being diverted via Worcester.

## 5.1 Worcester city centre single lines

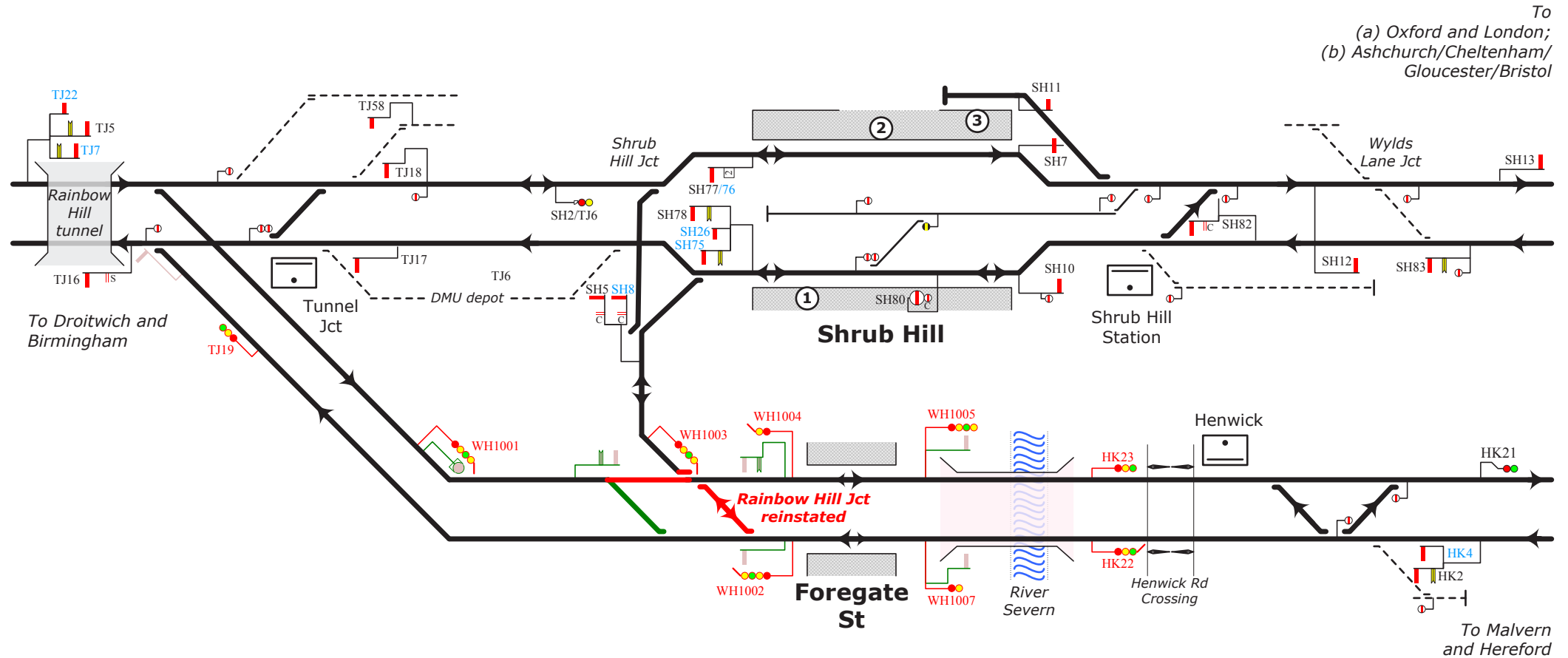
The following schematic diagram shows the track layout and signalling currently in use at Worcester (several non-passenger lines have been omitted):



**Figure 2 – Current Worcester track layout and signalling**

The two lines through Foregate Street station are separate single line sections. The one through Platform 1 must be used by all trains to/from Shrub Hill, including all GWR trains, while the line through Platform 2 is used by London Midland trains to/from Birmingham that do not call at Shrub Hill.

The following diagram shows a minimum set of improvements that would restore double-track working to most of the city centre area and provide considerable new operational flexibility:

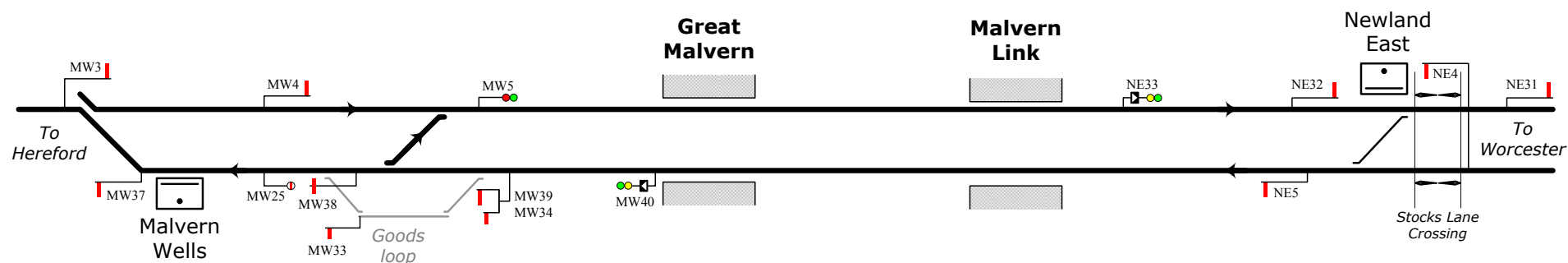


**Figure 3 – Minimum changes needed to address Worcester single-line section bottlenecks**

This scheme reinstates double track everywhere except for the very short section between Rainbow Hill Jn and Shrub Hill, and provides bi-directional running between Henwick and Rainbow Hill Jn for added flexibility. It would also allow trains from Shrub Hill to call at Foregate St but then continue towards Birmingham, and correspondingly in the opposite direction, which is not possible at present!

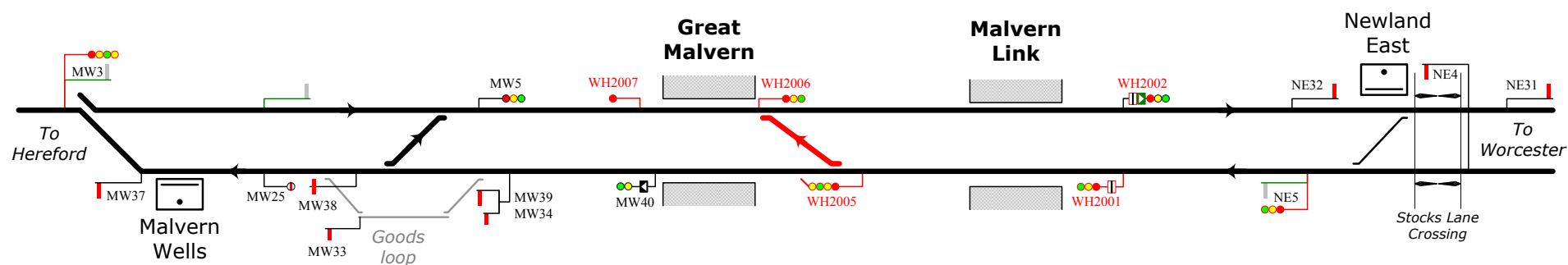
## 5.2 Malvern improvements

The following diagram shows the current Malvern layout and signalling arrangements:



**Figure 4 – Current Malvern signalling arrangements**

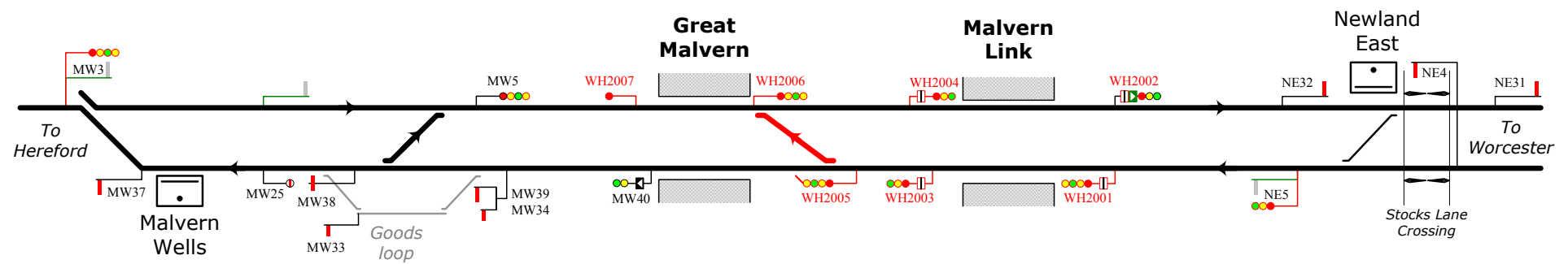
Two potential schemes are suggested to improve this, the second option being somewhat more costly but providing shorter headways through this section. The first option, which introduces a new crossover at Great Malvern and intermediate signals between there and Newland East, is shown below:



**Figure 5 – Malvern improvements – Option A**

The new crossover allows terminating trains to run directly into Platform 1 at Great Malvern, from where they can then depart directly on their return journeys.

The second option is similar but with the addition of a further pair of intermediate signals between Great Malvern and Malvern Link:

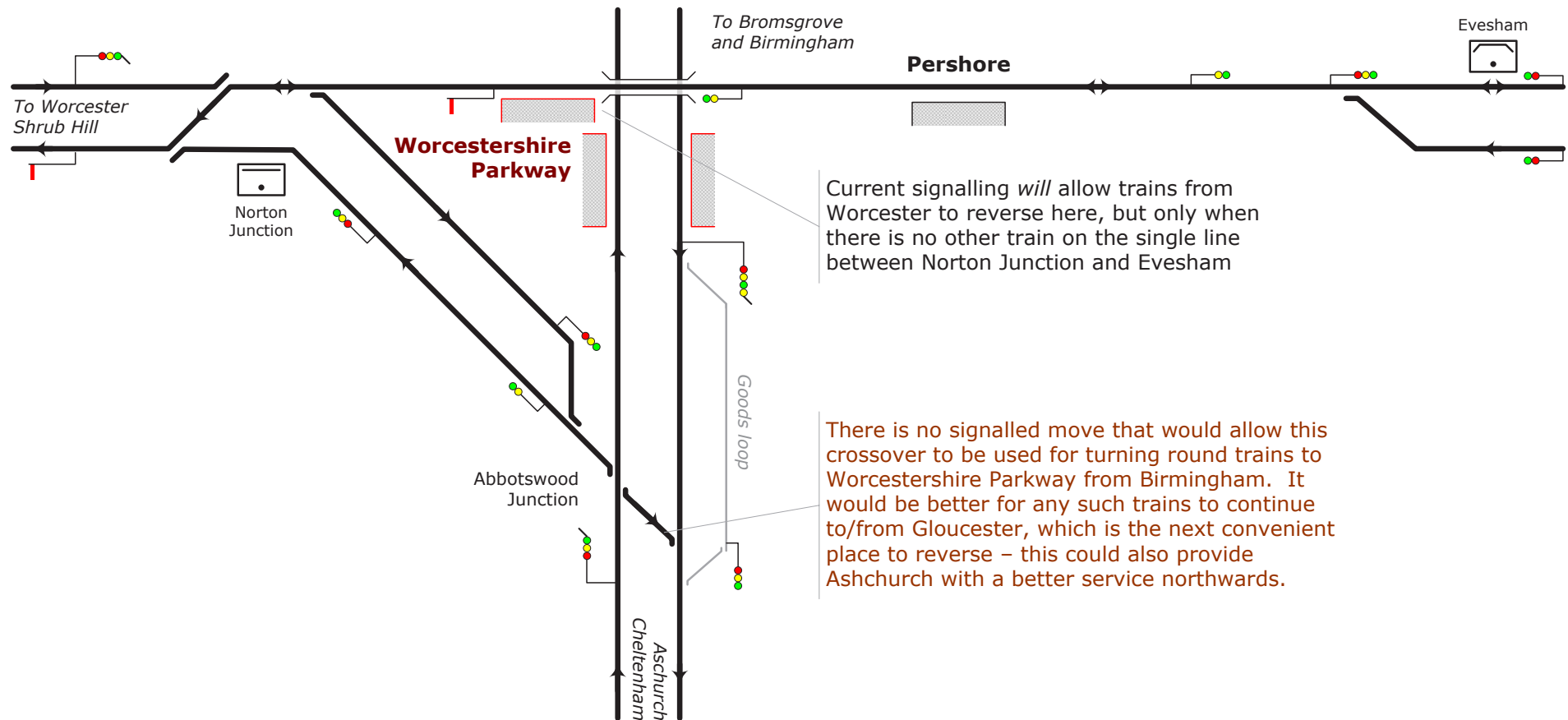


**Figure 6 - Malvern improvements – Option B**

Further benefits from either of these options could also be obtained by also providing additional ('intermediate block') signals in each direction between Newland East and Henwick.

### 5.3 Worcestershire Parkway and Worcester-Evesham improvements

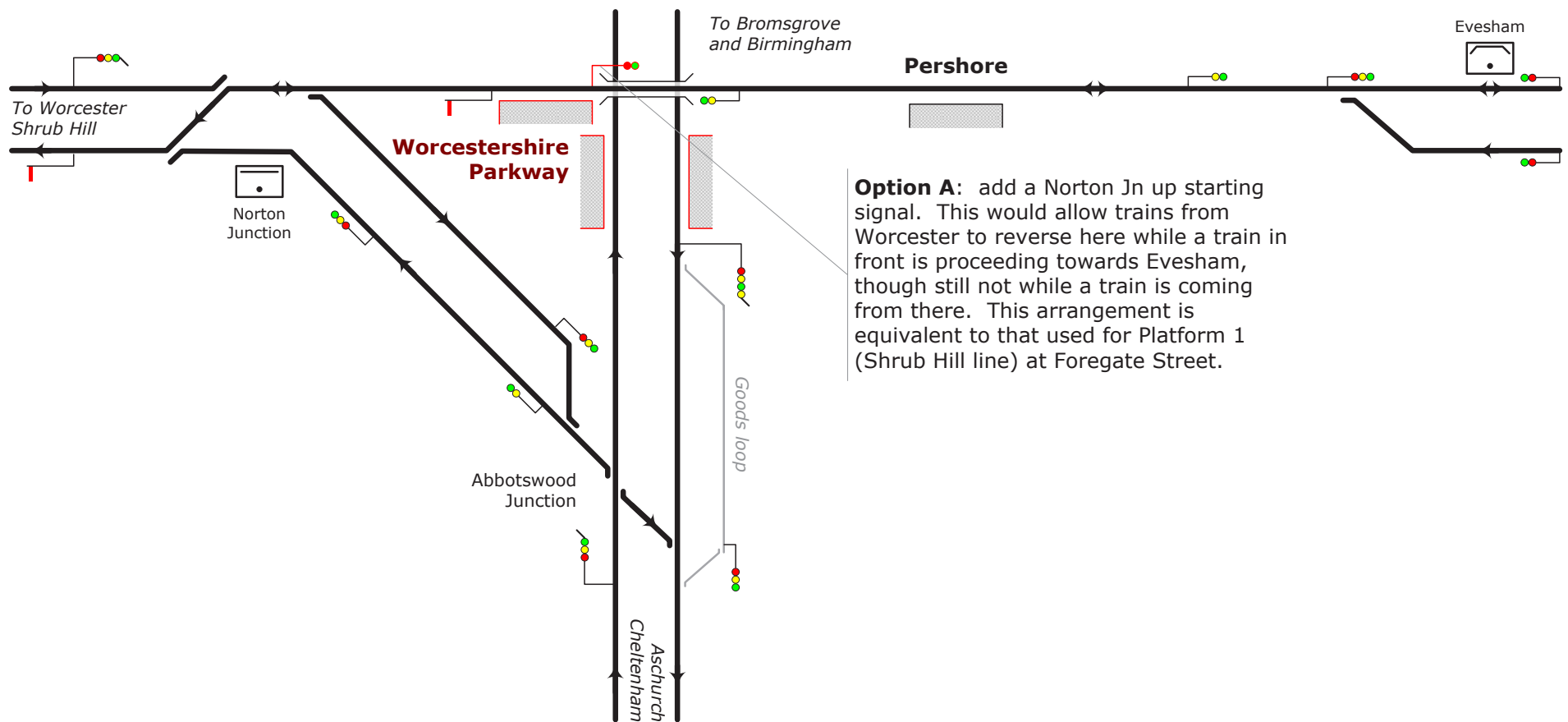
The following diagram shows the initial Worcestershire Parkway layout, with the currently existing signalling in this area and two resulting constraints noted:



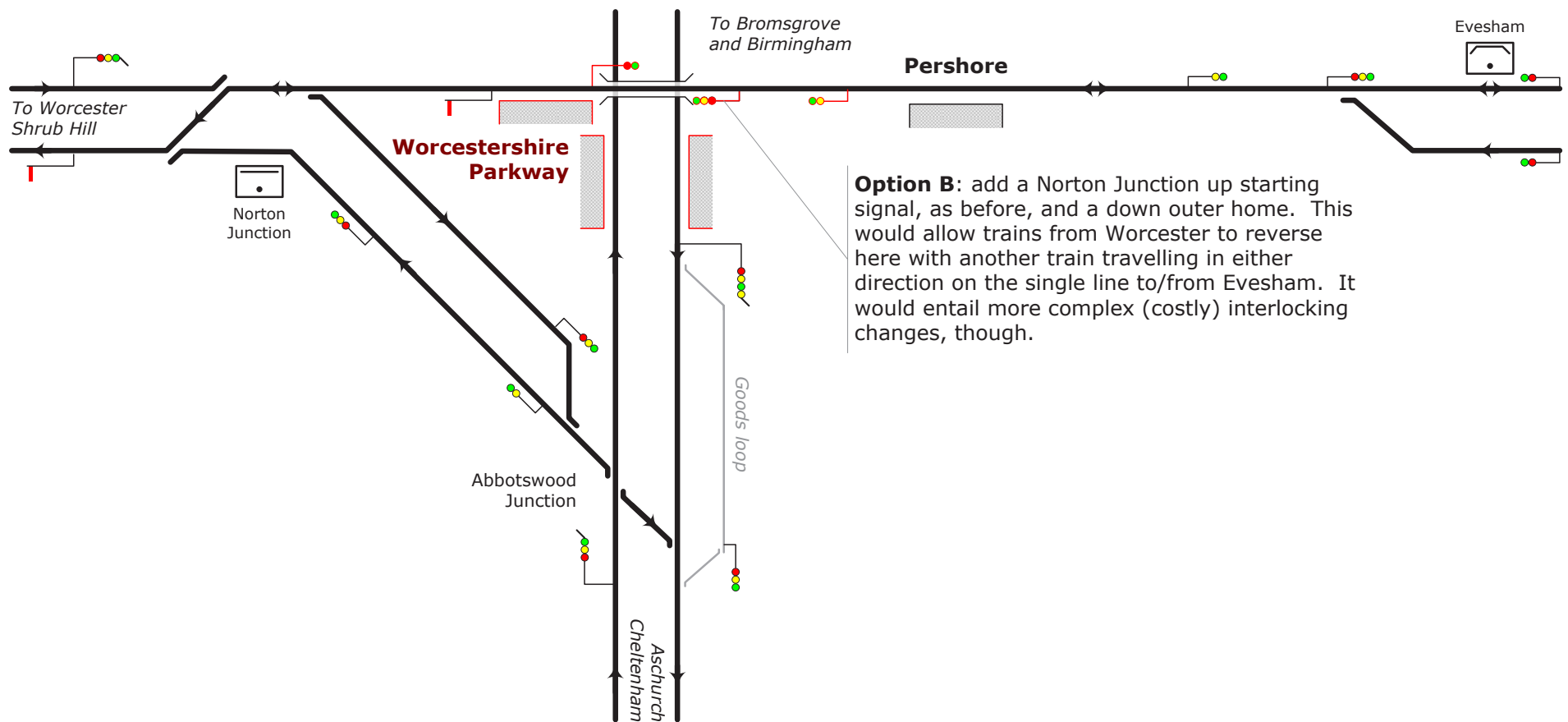
**Figure 7 – Initial Worcestershire Parkway layout, signalling and constraints**

Short of full redoubling to Evesham, some less costly options are available to reduce or eliminate the constraints on reversing trains. The following options are presented in increasing order of complexity/cost and of utility:

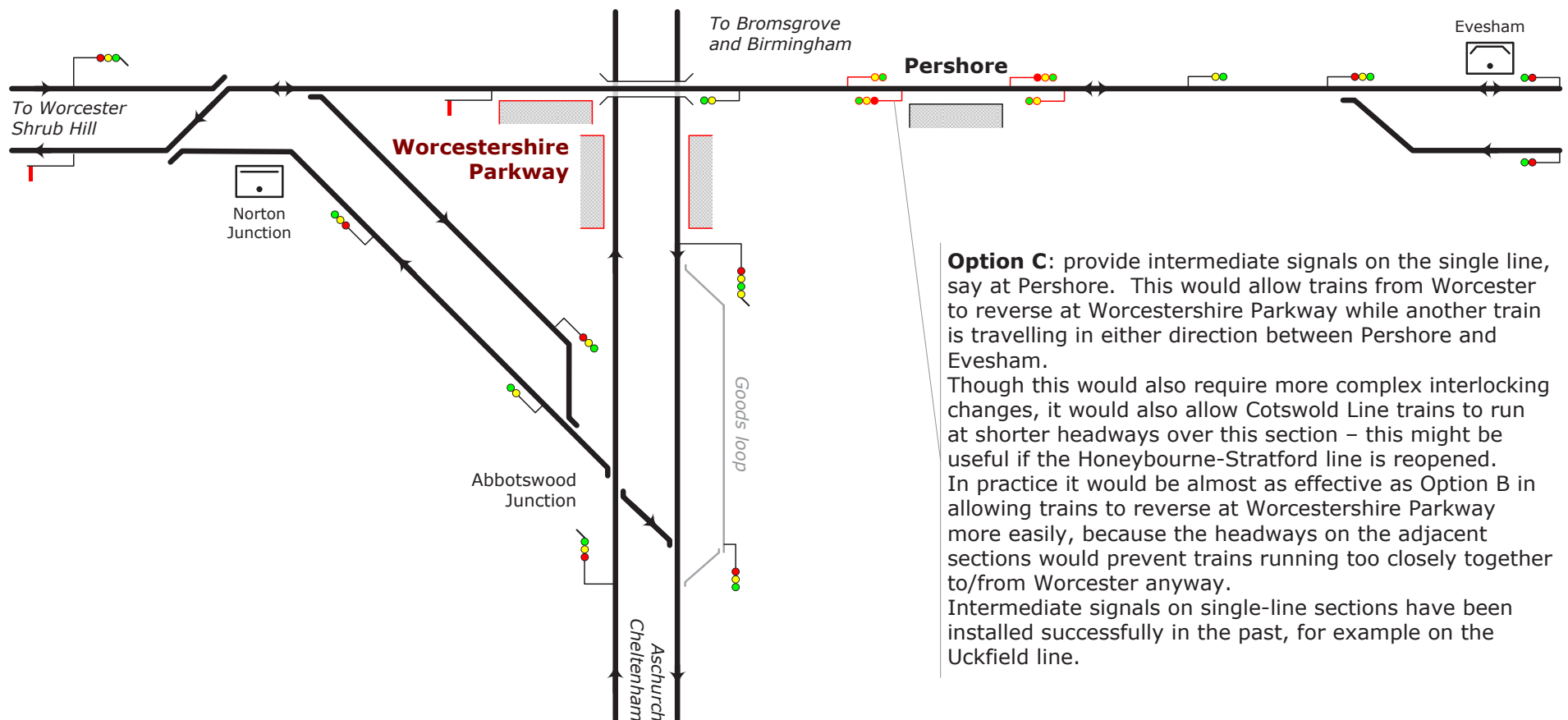




**Figure 8 – Worcestershire Parkway improvements – Option A**



**Figure 9 - Worcestershire Parkway improvements – Option B**



**Option C:** provide intermediate signals on the single line, say at Pershore. This would allow trains from Worcester to reverse at Worcestershire Parkway while another train is travelling in either direction between Pershore and Evesham.

Though this would also require more complex interlocking changes, it would also allow Cotswold Line trains to run at shorter headways over this section – this might be useful if the Honeybourne-Stratford line is reopened. In practice it would be almost as effective as Option B in allowing trains to reverse at Worcestershire Parkway more easily, because the headways on the adjacent sections would prevent trains running too closely together to/from Worcester anyway.

Intermediate signals on single-line sections have been installed successfully in the past, for example on the Uckfield line.

**Figure 10 - Worcestershire Parkway improvements – Option C**

## 5.4 Shrub Hill platform entry limitations

The current layout and signalling at Shrub Hill limits the choice of which platforms many incoming trains can arrive at (see Figure 2 in section 5.1 above). Though trains may depart in any direction from either of the main platforms (1 and 2), incoming trains can only reach the following platforms:

Train arriving from	Platforms accessible
London/Oxford/Bristol/Cheltenham	1 only
Birmingham/Droitwich	2 only
Hereford/Malvern/Foregate St	1 or 2

This constraint becomes quite significant in the early/mid evenings, because

- there is a succession of arrivals from the London/Bristol directions, and
- most of the evening peak LM trains via Bromsgrove call at Shrub Hill as well as Foregate St.

Although arrival into platforms 2 or 3 from the south is theoretically possible with the existing track layout, it is not allowed by the current signalling because several mechanically operated points on this route are not fitted with the 'facing point locks' (FPLs) required for it, and therefore no running signals have been provided for these moves either. This could be addressed by providing the missing FPLs and some new running signals, though it would be somewhat costlier than might at first be thought because, if power-operated points are installed, then existing shunting signal detection mechanisms would also have to be changed.

Addressing the restriction on arrivals from Birmingham/Droitwich would require more complex track and signalling changes and does not appear to be an appropriate candidate for a tactical early improvement scheme. This constraint might, however, be somewhat ameliorated by the scheme proposed in section 5.1 above for addressing the Worcester single-line sections, which would allow some of the trains terminating here to call at Foregate St *first*.

## 6 TECHNICAL NOTES ON PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

### 6.1 Worcester city centre redoubling

This scheme involves reinstating the former Rainbow Hill Junction where the Droitwich Loop line diverges from that from Foregate Street to Shrub Hill. This would be controlled from a new panel or workstation provided at Henwick signal box (there are now too few spaces in the lever frame there for that to be used).

This proposal aims to keep the changes needed at Shrub Hill and Tunnel Jn signalboxes to an absolute minimum.

The suggested scheme also includes additional down-direction (westbound) signals in rear of Henwick Level Crossing in order to eliminate the slow departures from Foregate Street that the current signalling imposes.

The double-line section between Tunnel Jn and Rainbow Hill Jn would be signalled using standard Track Circuit block principles (either with track circuits or using axle counters) and would eliminate the need for the current acceptance levers provided at Tunnel Jn and Henwick. The new WH1001 signal, and the re-sited TJ19, would be located a full overlap distance in rear of the junctions they protect (taking account of the low line speeds in this area), so that the rear signalboxes can freely signal trains up to these provided the track circuits are clear.

The line between Rainbow Hill Jn and Shrub Hill Jn can remain single as, with a running time of under two minutes, it would not represent a bottleneck. Keeping this short single line avoids the need to provide a complex junction at Shrub Hill. This would continue to be worked by TCB with the existing acceptance lever in Shrub Hill signalbox and a corresponding switch on the new Rainbow Hill Jn panel.

This proposal suggests a signal WH1003 for down trains at Rainbow Hill Jn, but this may be deemed to be too close after SH75 to meet contemporary standards. If so, then the following alternative is suggested:

- Install theatre indicators below SH75 and SH76 which will show the platform at Foregate Street into which the train is signalled.
- Provide routes on the Rainbow Hill Jn from "SH75/76" to WH1005 and WH1007 such that the act of setting these routes by the signaller releases a slot on SH75/76, thus having the same effect as the current Henwick acceptance lever. (This is analogous to the method by which Birmingham New Street panel currently provides slots for trains signalled to it on the Down or Up and Down Camp Hill lines at St Andrews Jn.)

Acceptance switches and levers will be needed between the Rainbow Hill Jn panel and the Henwick lever frame. The existing functions of the two existing acceptance levers in the frame are both made redundant by this proposal and could be re-used for this purpose.

Other notes:

Signal	Notes
<b>HK22</b>	Would incorporate a "Didcot feather", and be approach-controlled from red, due to the 15mph speed restriction over the "trailing" crossover at Henwick.
<b>TJ16</b>	This could additionally be repositioned as an LED signal on the far side of the tunnel if desired, eliminating the need for Tunnel Jn to do forward shunts into the section to Droitwich Spa when shunting units in/out of the depot.
<b>WH1004</b>	Also incorporates a "Didcot feather" – there is no route from this towards Tunnel Jn.

## 6.2 Malvern improvements

The new facing crossover would ideally be located approximately between the Madresfield Road and Barnards Green Road overbridges. This provides sufficient room for HST and other long train overhangs from the station platform but without having to locate the crossover too far towards Malvern Link.

Ideally the crossover will allow 40mph running so that flashing yellow aspects can be used at WH2001/WH2003.

The sections in both directions between Malvern Wells and Newland East are assumed to be converted to TCB, probably using axle counters. The existing block bells could continue in use for sending train descriptions.

Signal	Notes
<b>WH2001</b>	This is assumed to be a full braking distance in advance of NE5.
<b>WH2003</b>	(If provided) This is assumed to be a full braking distance in advance of WH2001, and sufficiently far beyond Malvern Link platform that it could step up to a flashing yellow while a train is calling at the station. Immediately in rear of the Moorlands Road overbridge?
<b>WH2005</b>	This must be sufficiently in rear of the facing crossover so that the latter does not fall within its overlap. There is assumed to be a full braking distance from WH2001 to WH2005, but not from WH2003 to this.

<b>Signal</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>MW40</b>	This is retained as an "accelerating distant", but could be moved say 100-200 yards closer to Malvern Wells as there is now a generous braking distance between WH2005 and MW39.
<b>WH2007</b>	This is a fixed red aspect for terminating down trains. It is assumed to be sufficiently far beyond the platform to allow for HST/10-car IEP platform overhangs. Might need a fixed banner repeater. An enhancement would be to provide a signalled route from this signal to MW38.
<b>MW3/ MW5</b>	As there is <b>not</b> a full braking distance between these two signals, MW3 would need to be held at red until a train is closely approaching if MW5 cannot be cleared.
<b>MW1</b>	(Not shown on the schematic.) This effectively becomes a repeater for MW3 only (see item above).
<b>WH2006</b>	This can be immediately in rear of the crossover, as no up train could ever approach it with the latter reversed. It is not assumed to be a full braking distance from MW5, hence the YY aspect provided on MW3. Would almost certainly need banner and platform repeaters.
<b>WH2004</b>	(If provided) This is not assumed to be a full braking distance from WH2006, hence the YY aspect on MW5.
<b>WH2002</b>	This is NE32 with a red aspect added. It is assumed to be a full braking distance from WH2002, but not from WH2004 (if provided).
<b>NE32</b>	As WH2002 is at the same location as the existing NE33 up distant, this is assumed to still be at a full braking distance from that.

### 6.3 Worcestershire Parkway improvements

The additional signalling in each option is assumed to be controlled from Norton Jn's lever frame.

An existing installation of intermediate signals on single-line sections can be found on the Uckfield line, controlled from Oxted signal box.



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