

West Yorkshire Combined Authority Decision on Funding for Development of Full Business Case for the New Parkway Rail Station at Leeds Bradford Airport

1. The preliminary Business Case has suggested that the new station might attract 470k passengers per year of which **almost half would be abstracted from other stations**. The prediction assumes significant demand associated with
 - a proposed employment hub (although anyone commuting to the hub would be faced with a 2.25 km walk from the station),
 - the airport (even though, since LBA is primarily a holiday flights airport, the demand for a shuttle-linked rail station serving the airport may be very low – a fact which is perhaps recognised in LBA’s Surface Access Strategy which envisages continued increases in its provision of parking spaces), and
 - park and ride (even though this would involve quite long and circuitous road journeys).
2. The existing Horsforth Station is about one mile distant and, two years ago, was attracting 435k passengers per year. Even with minimal off-street parking it already serves an important, if unofficial, park and ride function. It would be possible, at relatively low cost, to link the airport to the existing station and **the case for expanding the existing station as an alternative to the proposed new Parkway station deserves serious consideration***.
3. We understand that the option of expanding the existing Horsforth station was briefly considered at an early stage and was rejected as infeasible due to access and parking problems. However, to the best of our knowledge, there has been no serious consideration of the possibility of relocating the wood yard which currently occupies the obvious location for a car park and of constructing a new access in conjunction with a new bridge to the north of the existing one, nor any comparison of the strengths of the business cases for the two projects.
4. We suggest that, in granting approval to the request for funding for a full business case for the new parkway, **members should indicate their expectation that a full and fair comparison be made of the costs and benefits of expanding the existing Horsforth station as an alternative to the new Parkway**.

* Some observations:

- A new Parkway station would require significant expenditure to provide a road link to the A658 and, even then, would have limited potential to attract park and ride traffic.
- An extra station on the line would add to Harrogate-Leeds journey time and result in calls to have trains stopping at only one of the two stations thereby reducing the frequency at the existing station and/or providing only low frequency at Parkway.
- If the existing station were improved (additional parking; better access; increased service frequency by making use of the existing rail-turnback facility just north of the station; and provision for feeder buses from Horsforth, Cookridge, Bramhope, Adel, Lawnswood, and West Park;) **its potential as a park and ride station and multimodal hub is much greater than that of the proposed Parkway station**.
- If required, shuttle buses could run from existing Horsforth Station to the airport (10 mins along existing roads or 5 minutes if direct bus-only link were built to Scotland Lane. This compares with a 3 minute journey from Parkway to airport).

Submitted by North West Leeds Transport Forum (a consortium of ten resident and community associations in NW Leeds (West Park, Weetwood, Far Headingley, Drummond and Churchwood, Beckett Park, Foxhills, Turnways and Laurel Bank, North Hyde Park, Little Woodhouse, Friends of Beckett Park.)