

Northamptonshire Rail Strategy

Fit for Purpose



January 2013



(Blank Page)



Northamptonshire Rail Strategy

Contacts and Further Information

This is Northamptonshire County Council's Rail Strategy.

It sets out the overarching vision for rail within Northamptonshire and sets out our strategy to achieve it. This strategy is one of a series of thematic daughter documents to the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan that was adopted in April 2012.

Consultation on the first batch of the thematic strategies, including this Rail Strategy, took place between 3rd September and 19th October 2012. A summary of the consultation responses can be found on our website at:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Transport/TP/Pages/NTP-thematic-strategies.aspx>

If you have any problems accessing Northamptonshire County Council's website or do not have access to the internet, please contact us using the details below.

This strategy was approved and adopted by Northamptonshire County Council's Cabinet in December 2012.

This strategy together with the other Batch 1 daughter documents and the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan itself can be viewed on the County Council's website at:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Transport/TP/pages/northamptonshire-transportation-plan.aspx>

Should you have any queries regarding this strategy, please contact the Transport Planning Team.

Transport Planning
Northamptonshire County Council
County Hall
Northampton
NN1 1ED

Email: LTPconsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk



(Blank Page)



Contents

Theme & Content	Page No.
Northamptonshire Transportation Plan: Fit for Purpose	7
Introduction	13
The rail network in Northamptonshire	14
High Speed Rail	19
Other indicative timescales	22
Future aspirations for passenger services	24
Rail Stations	40
Rail Freight	45
Rail Infrastructure	47
Linking Policies to Objectives	50
Appendix 1 – Summary of Policies	51



(Blank Page)



Northamptonshire Transportation Plan: Fit for Purpose

Transportation is not an end in itself. The movement of people and goods takes place not for its own sake, but to fulfil the diverse needs and desires of the public. Therefore the County Council's transport policies are similarly promoted for their effect on other specific goals, priorities and objectives, rather than as an end in themselves.

Northamptonshire Transportation Plan Vision:

For Transport and Travel to contribute towards making Northamptonshire a great place to live and work, through creating tangible transport options to satisfy individual needs and to encourage more sustainable travel. The transport system will provide fast and efficient movement of people and goods, and will be accessible for all. Expanding networks and capacity of networks in Northamptonshire will be fully integrated into new developments and regeneration areas to support more sustainable communities.

Economic growth and prosperity is a top priority for Northamptonshire and connectivity has a vital role to play in encouraging businesses to locate to the area, and getting people to work and services such as education and health, as well as to leisure activities and for shopping. Improved technology and local accessibility will reduce the need to travel, whilst supporting economic growth, within a low carbon environment and Northamptonshire will become an exemplar for the latest developments in information technology, fuel technology, and new forms of transport.

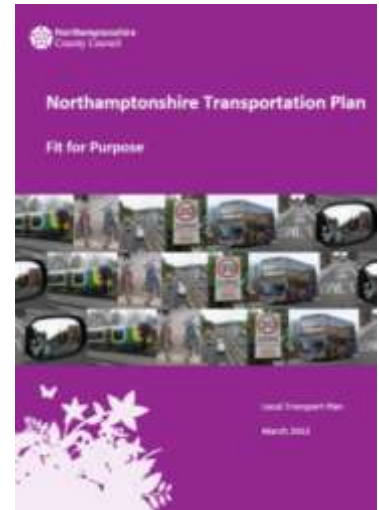
The county council will work in partnership with all stakeholders and the wider community to deliver this transport vision and strategy.

This transportation plan needs to be both aspirational and realistic at the same time. Current economic climates mean that transport is certainly in a more austere time than in the last 15 to 20 years and this plan needs to reflect that but at the same time still plan for future growth .

The overall aim for this Transportation Plan is:
'Northamptonshire Transportation - Fit for..... Purpose'

The aim 'fit for purpose' means creating a highway network that delivers exactly what Northamptonshire needs to be able to function plus what it needs to be able to grow, no more and no less.

This overarching aim can then be broken down into six objectives that have been chosen to guide this Transportation Plan. These objectives have been drawn up to reflect the issues which have been identified as locally important through consultation, while at the same time reflecting wider national and local policy context. These objectives have been deliberately chosen to reflect the main impacts that transport can have on the wider community, rather than being linked to particular schemes or measures. They form the basis upon which the policies and programmes contained in this Plan have been developed.

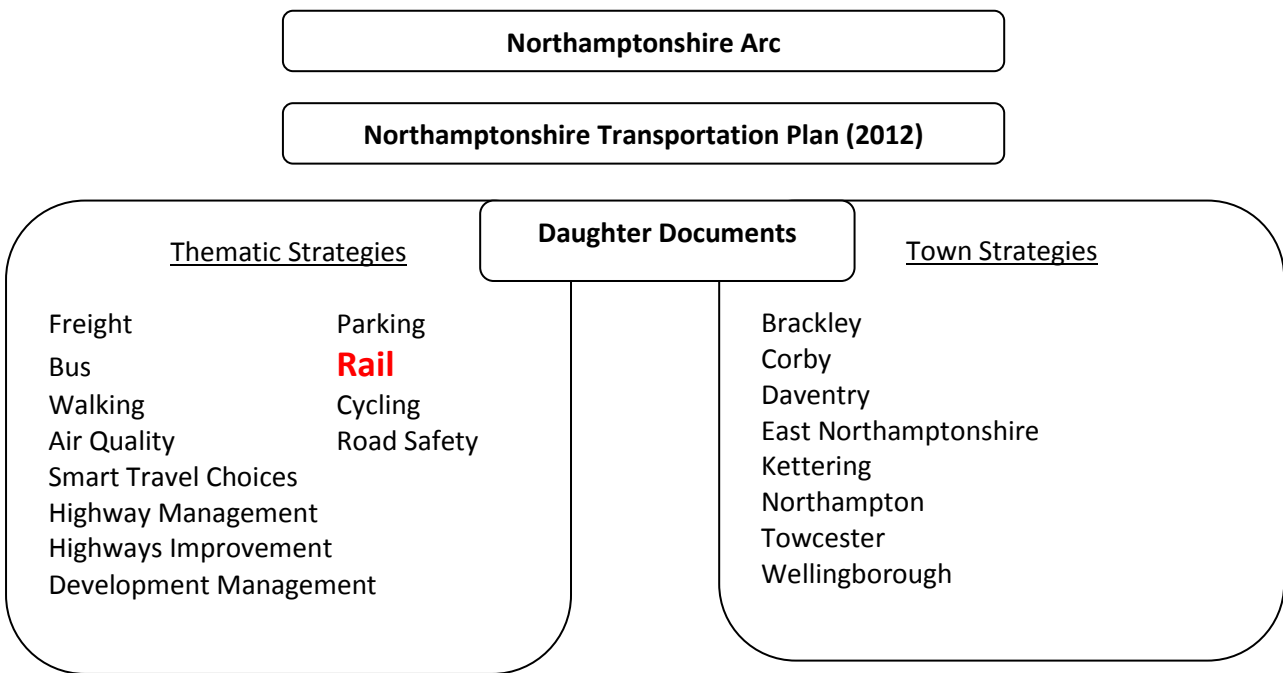


1. **Fit for.....the Future** – creating a transport system that supports and encourages growth and plans for the future impacts of growth, whilst successfully providing benefits for the County.
2. **Fit for.....the Community** – through the transport system help to maintain and create safe, successful, strong, cohesive and sustainable communities where people are actively involved in shaping the places where they live.
3. **Fit to.....Choose** – ensuring that the people of Northamptonshire have the information and the options available to them to be able to choose the best form of transport for each journey that they make.
4. **Fit for.....Economic Growth** – creating a transport system that supports economic growth, regeneration and a thriving local economy and successfully provides for population and business growth.
5. **Fit for.....the Environment** – to deliver a transport system that minimises and wherever possible reduces the effect of travel on the built, natural and historic environment.
6. **Fit for.....Best Value** - being clear about our priorities for investment and focusing on value for money by prioritising what we spend money on and how it can be beneficial for the county as a whole and search for alternative sources of funding.

Daughter Documents

This Strategy is the part of a series of documents which will eventually form the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan ‘suite of documents’. This suite of documents will include strategies or plans covering a range of transport themes and also detailed geographic strategies or plans for the Northamptonshire’s main towns.

Thematic strategies or plans that will be developed as daughter documents to the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan, of which the Rail Strategy is one:



The Northamptonshire Transportation Plan fits in with the Northamptonshire Arc, helps to deliver the Core Spatial Strategies in West and North Northamptonshire and supports the work of the Local Enterprise Partnerships.



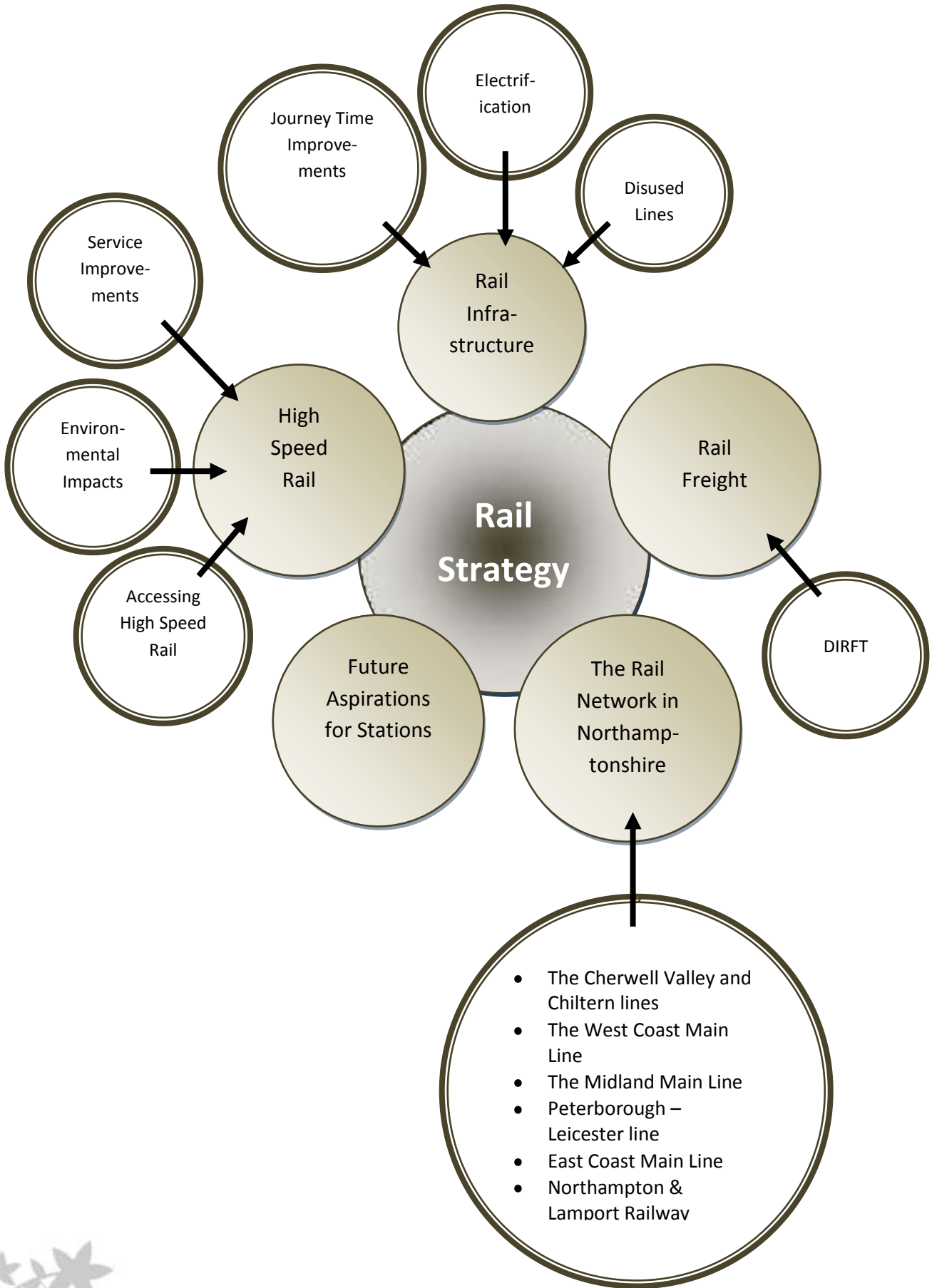
Rail Strategy

The Rail Strategy gives more detail on elements of the Northamptonshire Arc, such as the Northampton Fast-Rail Agenda. It helps to deliver modal-shift as part of the North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategies; and by improving the connectivity of the county can help the work of the Local Enterprise Partnerships. Improved rail services can also have advantages in terms of equalities and quality of life, particularly for those who do not have access to a car.

The following table shows how the Rail Strategy ties in with the six over-arching Northamptonshire Transportation Plan objectives:

Northamptonshire Transportation Plan Overarching Objectives						
	Fit for..... the Future	Fit for..... the Community	Fit to..... Choose	Fit for..... Economic Growth	Fit for..... the Environment	Fit for..... Best Value
Rail Strategy	The strategic connectivity offered by rail is important in making Northamptonshire an attractive place for growth to take place. Investment is also required to give more capacity appropriate to larger populations.	The strategy will help to provide community leadership on rail issues.	Making rail travel more appealing will give people more choice about how they choose to travel.	An Improved rail service in Northants will make the county more attractive to business looking to invest in the area.	Increasing the proportion of passenger and freight movements by rail will reduce vehicle emissions that are harmful to the environment, as will more electrification.	We will seek to encourage the rail industry to make appropriate value for money investment in Northamptonshire’s rail infrastructure and services, and will consider making a financial contribution to schemes where appropriate and affordable.





(Blank Page)



Introduction

This rail strategy forms an integral part of the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan, Northamptonshire County Council's Local Transport Plan. The rail strategy sets out the council's plans and policies in relation to rail services and infrastructure, both passenger and freight, across the county.

The County Council's role in rail services

The County Council does not have any direct role in providing rail services. Rail passenger services within the county are provided by operators under franchise to the Department for Transport. Rail freight services are provided by private operators. Rail infrastructure is owned either by Network Rail, or in the case of some rail freight terminals by private operators. The railway network is regulated by the Office of Rail Regulation, whose responsibilities cover both access to and safety on the rail network.

Despite having no direct responsibility for rail services, the County Council has a responsibility to cover the rail network in the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan, which should cover all transport modes conveying people within or through the county. It is important to do this because rail has a vital role in providing transport movements, and particularly in terms of strategic connections to London, Birmingham and other areas that make the county an attractive place for people to live and businesses to invest.

As well as being consulted on many rail industry proposals, the County Council can also have a role in facilitating investment by local partners in the railway, particularly around railway stations, and to a limited extent can provide such funding itself. The County Council can also help to ensure that there is good information and signage on how to reach stations and to access key facilities from stations.



The rail network in Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire is crossed by a number of rail lines, all but one of which have stations within the county, although in all cases county residents also use stations outside the county to access the system.

The Cherwell Valley and Chiltern lines

This line, running southwards from the West Midlands, passes for a short distance through the south-west corner of the county, with a station at King's Sutton. Just to the south, at Aynho Junction, the line splits with one line heading towards London Marylebone and the other heading towards Oxford and Reading. The route is not electrified.



Kings Sutton station is served by two passenger train operators. Chiltern operate trains from Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon towards London Marylebone. First Great Western operate local stopping services from Banbury towards Oxford and London Paddington. Because of the distances and stopping patterns, the Chiltern route will normally be preferred by passengers from Kings Sutton wishing to travel to London or Birmingham. .

Cross Country Trains do not stop within Northamptonshire, but their services stop at Banbury just over the border in Oxfordshire. Most of their services serving Banbury are on two main axes:

- Newcastle – Durham – Darlington - York – Doncaster - Sheffield – Derby – Birmingham New Street – Birmingham International – Coventry – Leamington Spa – Banbury – Oxford – Reading (with some trains extending to Southampton)
- Manchester Piccadilly – Stockport – Macclesfield – Stoke-on-Trent – Stafford – Wolverhampton – Birmingham New Street – Birmingham International – Coventry – Leamington Spa – Banbury – Oxford – Reading – Basingstoke – Winchester – Southampton Airport Parkway – Southampton Central – Brockenhurst – Bournemouth

Both axes are generally served hourly, although with some variations at each end of the day.

Because of the wider variety of services, and its more convenient location, Banbury is used by many Northamptonshire rail passengers.

The line through Kings Sutton is well used by freight traffic, with an average of 38 freight trains per day (average 2010-11 weekday, sum of both directions), making it one of the busiest rail freight



routes in the country. Most of the freight trains are on the Southampton – West Midland corridor, which is cleared to W10 loading gauge.

The West Coast Main Line

The West Coast Main Line crosses the county in a south-east to north-west direction between Milton Keynes and Rugby, linking London with the West Midlands, North Wales, North-West England and Western Scotland. The four tracks running from Milton Keynes split into two pairs at Roade. The 'fast lines' continue through Blisworth and Weedon to Rugby, while the 'slow lines' run via stations at Northampton and Long Buckby to re-join the 'fast lines' immediately to the south of Rugby. There are no stations on the 'fast lines' within Northamptonshire, although residents use both Milton Keynes Central and Rugby stations to access the rail network. The route is electrified throughout, although used by some diesel trains which operate 'beyond the wires', e.g. to North Wales.

Services at Northampton and Long Buckby stations are provided by London Midland whose trains run from London Euston through Northampton to Birmingham, with a very limited service via the Trent Valley line to Crewe. A very limited number of Virgin Trains services also call at Northampton, supplementing the London Midland service.

Virgin Trains operate services on the 'fast lines' linking London Euston with destinations such as Birmingham New Street, Wolverhampton, Chester, Holyhead, Liverpool Lime Street, Manchester Piccadilly, Preston and Glasgow Central. Apart from the very limited service to Northampton, these trains do not stop in Northamptonshire. For most of the day Milton Keynes Central is served by three hourly Virgin Trains services linking London Euston with Birmingham New Street, Manchester Piccadilly and Chester/North Wales and Rugby is served by an hourly Virgin Trains service between London Euston and Birmingham New Street. Both stations have a very limited number of services to other destinations.

ScotRail operates sleeping car services to Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Fort William, Glasgow and Inverness. These services do not stop in Northamptonshire, and the closest station stop is at Watford Junction to the south and Crewe to the north.

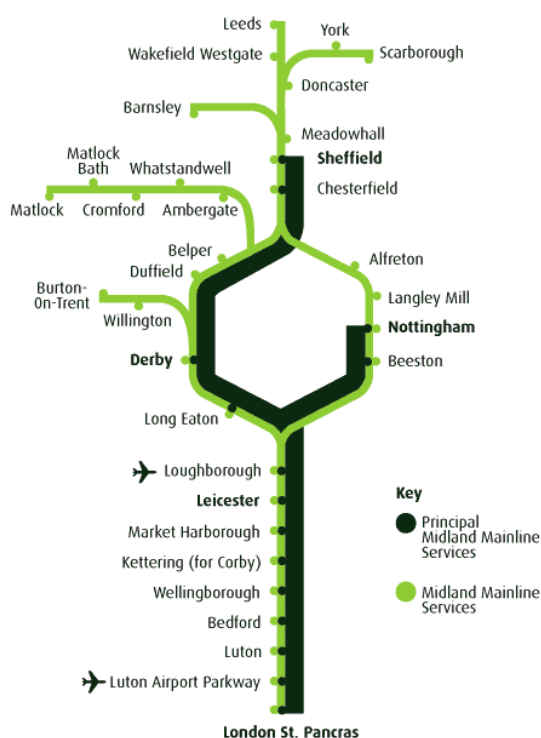
The West Coast Main Line through Northamptonshire is one of the busiest rail freight routes in Britain, being used by around 65 freight trains per day (average 2010-11 weekday, sum of both directions). Around three-quarters of these trains use the slow lines on the Northampton Loop, the remaining quarter use the fast lines through Weedon. The route is cleared to W10 loading gauge for inter-modal traffic. Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) is located off the Northampton Loop, close to the Northamptonshire-Warwickshire border.



The Midland Main Line

The Midland Main Line runs through Northamptonshire in a broadly north-south direction. Running northwards from London St Pancras through Bedford the line enters Northamptonshire near Irchester and passes through stations at Wellingborough and Kettering. North of Kettering, at Glendon Junction, the line splits. One arm runs almost northwards through the new station at Corby towards Oakham and Melton Mowbray. The other arm heads north-westwards passing Desborough en route to Market Harborough and Leicester. Market Harborough station is used by passengers from the surrounding villages in Northamptonshire. The Midland Main Line is electrified south of Bedford.

Historically, the Midland Main Line had four (or more) tracks from London St Pancras as far as Glendon Junction, where it split into two double-track routes. One passed through Corby, Oakham and Melton Mowbray, and the other through Market Harborough and Leicester, before rejoining at Syston in Leicestershire, from where there were four tracks northwards through Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. However in the 1980s, the line was rationalised: whilst four tracks were retained from London as far as Sharnbrook Junction (north of Bedford), from Sharnbrook to Bedford there were three tracks, apart from a 3¼ mile section between Harrowden Junction and Kettering South Junction with only two tracks. Network Rail has recently restored three tracks over this section. North of Glendon Junction, the Leicester route remains double track, while the line from Glendon Junction to Corby is single track, with double-track resumed just north of Corby station.



Passenger services on the Midland Main Line within Northamptonshire are operated by East Midlands Trains. For most of the day Northamptonshire stations are served by two hourly services:

- London St Pancras – Luton – Bedford – Wellingborough – Kettering – Corby
- London St Pancras – Luton Airport Parkway – Bedford – Wellingborough – Kettering – Market Harborough – Leicester – Loughborough – Beeston – Nottingham

Some other services call at peak hours. A limited number of the London – Corby trains run to/from Oakham, Melton Mowbray and Derby.

Market Harborough station is additionally served by an hourly London St Pancras – Market Harborough – Leicester – East Midlands Parkway – Nottingham service. Other East Midlands Trains services, which mostly run non-stop between London and Leicester run through to Derby and Sheffield, with only occasional calls at Northamptonshire stations..

The Midland Main Line through Kettering and Wellingborough is used by 17 freight trains per day (2010-11 average weekday figures, sum of both directions). Of these freight trains 15 take the line towards Market Harborough, and 6 (sic) the line to Corby. 4 freight trains use the line north of Corby. The line is only cleared to W7 loading gauge, meaning it is unsuitable for use by most current inter-modal freight traffic. There are two rail freight terminals in the county, accessed off the Midland Main Line. A terminal at Wellingborough is used as a base for engineering work on the London Underground network, and a terminal at Corby has been used for the distribution of cars, although currently receiving no rail traffic. There is also a rail connection to the Tata Steel plant at Corby.

Peterborough – Leicester line

This route passes through Northamptonshire for about one mile between Ketton and Stamford. The route is served by an hourly passenger service operated by Cross Country Trains linking Birmingham New Street, Coleshill Parkway, Nuneaton, Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Oakham, Stamford, Peterborough, March, Ely, Cambridge, Audley End and Stansted Airport. East Midlands Trains operate a limited number of trains between Nottingham and Peterborough via this route.

The section of this line through Northamptonshire was used by 10 freight trains per day (2010-11 average weekday figures, sum of both directions). However, the line has recently been upgraded to W10 loading gauge to act as an alternative route for container trains between the Haven ports and the West Coast Main Line at Nuneaton, and significant growth in rail freight traffic on the route is therefore forecast.

East Coast Main Line

Although outside the county, the East Coast Main Line is used by many passengers from Northamptonshire. Huntingdon station is used by passengers from the east of the county to access First Capital Connect services running between London Kings Cross and Peterborough. Peterborough station is used by residents from the north-east of the county, and further afield, to access East Coast services linking London Kings Cross with destinations in Yorkshire, the North East and Scotland, as well as various destinations in East Anglia.



Northampton & Lamport Railway

The Northampton & Lamport Railway is a preserved railway operating for 1½ miles along the former Northampton – Market Harborough line, adjacent to the Brampton Valley Way a long-distance right of way which occupies the former trackbed. Currently they only have one station, and so while they provide a valuable leisure facility, the railway cannot be considered to perform a useful transport function in terms of conveying passengers from A to B.

The railway has plans to extend both northwards and southwards, and the County Council as owner of the former trackbed, supports their ambition. However, as the line will still be mainly a leisure facility, even with more stations, it is not considered further in this strategy.



High-Speed Rail

High Speed 2 is the government's proposal to provide direct, high capacity, high speed rail links between London, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester, with intermediate stations in the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. There will also be direct links to Heathrow Airport and to the Continent via the High Speed 1 line.

At its Full Council meeting on 23rd June 2011 the County Council agreed:

'That this Council confirms its support for the principle of High Speed Rail in Britain, but only if:

- a) A clear professionally certified business case is made for the value of money of the investment needed, which significantly outweighs the advantages for the same investment which could otherwise be made into the existing transportation infrastructure of the county; and
- b) That every effort is made to identify the most the least intrusive route possible, and that any detrimental and environmental impact on the countryside and communities that live in the areas affected are fully compensated and mitigated.'

'That the council, recognising that the advent of high speed services is probably 15 years way for the west coast line and 30 years away for cities served by the Midland Mainline, urges that improvements sought in the bearer future to existing infrastructure and services should be given high priority so that capacity and service enhancement is achieved in the interim and is available for conventional services if the high speed services come on stream'.

In January 2012, the government announced its intention to proceed with the preparation of a hybrid Bill for the London to West Midlands section of route. Further refinements have been made to the route to reduce its environmental impact, including additional sections of tunnel on the route within Northamptonshire.

The government plans to build High Speed 2 in two phases. The line from London to the West Midlands and the connection to High Speed 1 is planned to open in 2026, followed in 2032-33 by the onward legs to Manchester and Leeds and the connections to Heathrow.

Planning and building the high speed network will be a huge undertaking. Approval to construct the first phase will be sought through a hybrid bill in Parliament, planned for the autumn of 2013 – giving those affected by the decision the chance to petition Parliament.

In the interim, the County Council will be working with HS2 Limited and local communities to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are included in the designs for the sections of route within Northamptonshire. We will also be pressing for improved services on the West Coast and Midland Main Lines, both before and after the opening of the two phases of High Speed 2.

Environmental Mitigation

The proposed High Speed Rail line enters Northamptonshire to the north of Brackley and then passes through a large area of rural South Northamptonshire. Although significant sections of the route are to be placed in green tunnels or cuttings, the rolling nature of the countryside, combined with the number of water courses to be crossed means that there are many sections of the route on embankment or viaduct.

In order to minimise the impact which the route has on the towns and villages by which it passes, it is essential that appropriate mitigation measures are put in place to protect the communities from the noise, vibration and visual impact of the route and associated works, and to reduce the impact of the scheme on both the natural and historic environment. During the construction period, we will expect the impacts on communities from noise and dust to be kept to a minimum, and for construction traffic to use suitable routes, avoiding minor roads and village. Where the proposed route crosses highways and rights of way, we will expect closures during construction to be kept to a minimum and alternative routes maintained during periods when temporary closures are necessary. Once the route is open we will expect all highways and rights of way to be restored, with diversions where necessary.

Policy RAIL 1

- a) We will work with HS2 Limited, local communities and other agencies to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are included in the designs for the sections of the proposed High-Speed Rail Route within Northamptonshire.
- b) We will expect the impact on local communities from the construction of the proposed route to be kept to a minimum, particularly in relation to construction traffic.
- c) We will expect the connectivity of the main highway network and rights of way network to be maintained once the line is complete, and closures during the construction period to be minimised.

Accessing High Speed Rail

The proposed interchange station close to Birmingham International station has potential to enable Northamptonshire travellers to access the High Speed Rail network if trains to an appropriate range of destinations stop there. However, the proposed new station is some distance from the existing station facility, and facilities may need to be provided to minimise the time taken to interchange between conventional and high-speed rail services there.



Similar potential may also exist in relation to the proposed new High Speed Rail station in the East Midlands, providing it is located to allow interchange with services on the Midland Main line calling at Wellingborough and Kettering stations.

Policy RAIL 2

We will expect the proposed High Speed Rail stations at Birmingham International/Airport and in the East Midlands to enable Northamptonshire travellers to access High Speed Rail services to a range of destinations in the north of England and Scotland.

Service Improvements

Ministers have stated that the proposed High Speed Rail network offers significant potential for Northamptonshire in terms of utilisation of capacity released by the transfer of Inter-City services to the High Speed line allowing more trains to serve local stations, such as an improved service from Northampton to London. There is also a crucial need to ensure that with the removal of many Inter-City services from current routes, it will still be possible to make equivalent long distance journeys from Northamptonshire stations to destinations in the north of England and Scotland without a time penalty.

While we wish to see improvements in Northamptonshire's rail services in the interim, realising the benefits of the capacity released by a new High Speed Rail line will probably be an issue for the franchise after the next one, and there will be an ongoing need to ensure that appropriate provision continues to feature in government and rail industry plans.

Policy RAIL 3

We will expect that following opening of the proposed High Speed Rail network, there will be no reduction in the range of destinations which can be reached from Northamptonshire without a change of trains and that released capacity will be used to improve the frequency and journey times of trains serving Northamptonshire stations.



Other indicative timescales

High Level Output Specification

The Secretary of State for Transport issued her High Level Output Specification (HLOS) and Statement of Funds Available (SOFA) in July 2012. These are part of the statutory process for determining the funding of the rail industry in Control Period 5 (2014 – 2019) and after consideration by the Office of Rail Regulation will form the basis for Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan.

Franchising

The passenger rail network is operated through a series of franchises, many of which will terminate and be re-let over the next few years. This will provide an opportunity for the County Council to seek improved rail services in line with this Rail Strategy.

Five different franchises serve stations in the county, while two more franchises have trains which pass through the county without stopping. A number of other franchises serve stations nearby, and are referred to in this strategy. All franchises are let by the Department for Transport, except for the ScotRail franchise which is the responsibility of the Scottish government.

The termination dates of the rail franchises described in this strategy are shown in the table below. Franchises operating services calling at Northamptonshire stations are shown in bold. Other franchises operate services which pass through the county without stopping (Cross Country and Scot Rail) or serve stations outside the county which are referenced in this strategy. Following the termination of the refranchising for InterCity West Coast renewal process for all franchises is currently on hold.

Franchise	Train Operating Company (Owner)	Start Date	End Date	Renewal process
InterCity West Coast	Virgin Trains (Virgin Rail Group)	Mar-97	Dec-12	Refranchising halted. Virgin to continue until May – Nov 14.
Great Western	First Great Western (First Group)	Apr-06	Apr-13	Invitation to Tender Dec-11
Thameslink	First Capital Connect (First Group)	Apr-06	Sep-13	Invitation to Tender Dec-11
South Central	Southern (Govia)	Sep-09	Jul-15	
InterCity East Coast	East Coast Main Line Co Ltd	Nov-09	Dec-13	

Franchise	Train Operating Company (Owner)	Start Date	End Date	Renewal process
ScotRail	First ScotRail (First Group)	Aug-04	2014	Sleeper services to form separate franchise in future
East Midlands	East Midlands Trains (Stagecoach)	Nov-07	Jul-15*	
West Midlands	London Midland (Govia)	Nov-07	Sep-15*	
Cross Country	Cross Country (Arriva)	Nov-07	Mar-16*	
Chiltern	Chiltern Railways (DB Region)	Mar-02	Dec-21	

Note: * - End date subject to performance review

Long Term Planning Process

Network Rail has recently completed its programme of Route Utilisation Strategies. These are now being replaced by a Long Term Planning Process, which will look at both 10- and 30-year planning horizons to help inform investment priorities for Control Period 6 (2019 -2024) and beyond.

Future aspirations for passenger services

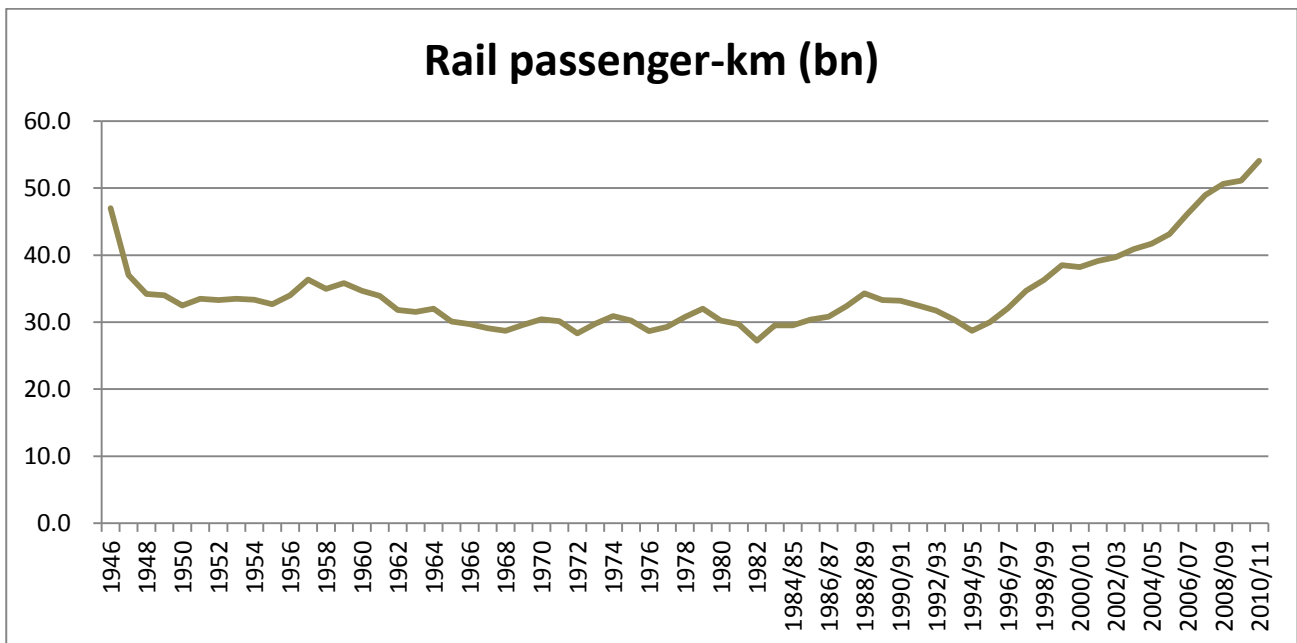
The following section sets out the County Council’s aspirations for passenger services to the rail stations within the county and just outside the county used by Northamptonshire residents. These policies will form the basis for our responses to consultations on new franchises and timetable changes, and otherwise inform our engagement as a local stakeholder.

For stations outside Northamptonshire, our policies concentrate on the journey opportunities which are likely to be used by Northamptonshire residents, and do not consider the full range of journeys such as commuting into these stations, where such journeys fall wholly outside Northamptonshire.

We believe that these aspirations are realistic, as in many cases they represent a level of service that has been provided to these stations in recent years, but which it has not been possible to continue because of line capacity issues. We believe that the capacity which will be released on the West Coast and Midland Main Lines by the High Speed Rail proposals will allow these aspirations to be achieved, but wish to see those that can be achieved at the earliest opportunity.

Passenger travel on the railway has grown considerably since privatisation in the mid-1990s, and there is now more passenger rail travel than at any time since World War II.

Figure 1 – Rail passenger-kilometres by year (Great Britain)



Source: [Rail Statistics \(http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/rail/\)](http://www.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/rail/) Table RAI0101



The table below shows patronage figures for stations covered in this section. Stations within Northamptonshire are indicated by bold type.

Table 1 –Station Usage

	2002/03	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Growth 02/3- 10/11
Banbury	920602	1137434	1174068	1289983	1469485	1579510	1706264	1857004	102%
Bicester North	596326	702998	673664	801822	910506	984806	1126838	1227590	106%
Corby							115372	176706	
Huntingdon	1277164	1360288	1373378	1448338	1564270	1592696	1542100	1629780	28%
Kettering	853990	933270	920850	1012009	1085989	1112390	989516	989418	16%
Kings Sutton	39745	40321	35215	39090	44512	44388	39994	44806	13%
Long Buckby	140009	138777	136732	144748	149274	157154	183108	202964	45%
Market Harborough	519029	574947	593571	660824	701661	717862	674720	719798	39%
Milton Keynes Central	3925098	3815435	4134255	4557209	4690023	4551538	4627076	5202824	33%
Northampton	1723579	1854579	1969868	2144857	2239426	2223872	2208500	2496018	45%
Peterborough	3386580	3689729	3720034	3960429	4070725	4099754	3930704	4076724	20%
Rugby	930971	971631	1095912	1154728	1160481	1248816	1382974	1564834	68%
Wellingborough	746462	837432	797293	881898	932818	964034	890748	930670	25%
GB journeys (million)	976	1040	1076	1145	1218	1266	1258	1354	39%

Source: ORR Station Usage statistics; DfT Rail Statistics

Cherwell Valley and Chiltern lines

Kings Sutton is the only railway station located in South Northamptonshire. Although having a relatively infrequent service, it serves a rural hinterland around the Oxfordshire – Northamptonshire border and is preferred by many because parking is easier than at other stations such as Banbury.

Key destinations for travel from Kings Sutton include London and Birmingham, as well as more local travel opportunities to Banbury and Oxford.

Proposed timetable changes by Chiltern Trains from December 2012 would result in some long gaps in their service; particularly at the times people are most likely to want to use the trains to and from London. While the County Council accepts that the service to Kings Sutton will be less frequent than those to much better used stations such as Banbury and Bicester, it considers the proposed timetable unacceptable and the policy below sets out our aspirations for what we believe is a reasonable service frequency in line with current and previous franchise specifications.

Policy RAIL 4

The minimum train service at King's Sutton station should be:

- A standard 2-hourly daily service to London Marylebone
 - ~ Enhanced to hourly during Monday to Friday morning peaks for travel to London and evening peaks for travel from Marylebone
- A standard 2-hourly daily service to Oxford
 - ~ Including journeys to provide convenient commuter trains on Monday to Friday for those working in Oxford
- As close as possible to an hourly service to Banbury, combining separate 2-hourly services from London Marylebone and Oxford.
- A through train in Monday – Friday morning peaks for commuters to Birmingham and corresponding evening peak return timed conveniently for those working in Birmingham
 - ~ Convenient connections providing hourly journey opportunities with no more than one change to/from Birmingham at all other times.

Located just across the border in Oxfordshire, Banbury station is used by rail travellers from a wide area of South Northamptonshire. As well as having a more frequent service to London and Birmingham than is the case at Kings Sutton, Banbury is also served by Cross Country services giving access to a range of destinations across Britain, with many more destinations accessible by changing trains.

Our policy with regards to services from Banbury broadly reflects current service patterns.

Policy RAIL 5

The minimum train service at Banbury station should be:

- A ½-hourly daily service between Birmingham Moor Street and London Marylebone
~ Providing at least an hourly service to intermediate stations at Solihull, Warwick Parkway, Warwick, Leamington, Bicester North, Princes Risborough and High Wycombe.
- Hourly services on the Manchester – Birmingham – Reading – Bournemouth and Newcastle – Sheffield – Birmingham – Reading corridors, calling at principal stations en route.
~ These two services should combine to give as close as possible a ½ hourly service between Birmingham and Reading
- A 2-hourly through service to Stratford-upon-Avon
- A 2-hourly local service to Kings Sutton, Heyford, Tackley and Oxford
~ Combining with additional stops in Marylebone services to give as close as possible an hourly service to Kings Sutton

Bicester North station is used by some residents from the south of Northamptonshire, for whom it is the most convenient station. Our policy of two trains per hour to London and one per hour to Birmingham broadly reflects current service patterns.

Bicester Town station is currently served only by a limited local service to Oxford, with the line eastwards to Bletchley not used by passenger trains and partly disused. However, two projects are expected to transform services from the station during the next few years. Subject to the results of a public inquiry, Chiltern's Evergreen 3 project will provide a new connection with the Chiltern line to the east of the station and enable a new service to operate between Oxford and London Marylebone, supplementing the current London service from Bicester North. By 2017 it is expected that this will be joined by East-West Rail, which has recently gained government approval to re-open the line between Bicester and Bletchley. In the longer term there are aspirations to extend this service eastwards from Bedford to Cambridge and Ipswich.

Policy RAIL 6

The minimum train service at Bicester North station should be:

- A ½-hourly daily service to High Wycombe and London Marylebone
- An hourly daily service to Birmingham Moor Street, Solihull, Warwick, Leamington, Banbury, Haddenham & Thame Parkway and Princes Risborough.

Following the completion of the Evergreen 3 and East-West Rail projects, the minimum train service at Bicester Town station should be:

- A ½-hourly daily service to Oxford and London Marylebone
- A ½-hourly daily service from Reading, Didcot and Oxford running to Bletchley and then alternately to Bedford and Milton Keynes Central.

West Coast Main Line

Northampton has long suffered from not being located on the main West Coast Main Line. Despite improved journey times introduced in December 2012 under London Midland's Project 110, rail services from Northampton to London remain slower than those from places of equivalent size located further away, but served by faster services.

The following table compares journey times in the standard off-peak hour to London from Northampton with those from other nearby places on the West Coast Main Line.

	Population	Fastest Journey time (minutes)	Distance (miles)	Average speed (mph)
Northampton	212,100	55	66	72
Milton Keynes Central	207,057	35-366	50	83-85
Rugby	63,323	50	82	98
Coventry	315,700	61-62	94	90-92

Note: population figures shown are the best available information for the town/city in 2011.

Improved rail connections to London, Birmingham and other large cities are vital to ensuring the county town's growth and economic prosperity, and our policy therefore supports a **step change** in the rail service provided for Northampton.

Faster services are needed between Northampton and London, both to encourage businesses to locate here and housing growth in the town. While commuter flows to London in the morning and back in the evening are the dominant flows, business travel for meetings etc occurs in both directions and travel for shopping and leisure takes many people from Northampton to London at off-peak times. As a result of the wide range of attractions in London, trains can be busy at what are conventionally regarded as off-peak times, such as returning from London in the late evening or heading into London on a Sunday morning.

London-bound trains are also used by people from Northampton heading to other destinations for both work and leisure, principally Milton Keynes, but also many other intermediate stations. There are also significant flows of commuters and other passengers travelling into Northampton from these stations. In addition to the fast service, there is also a need for a parallel service which calls at these other key destinations such as a Wolverton, Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Hemel Hempstead and Watford Junction. This service is multi-purpose, as while at the Northampton end it may be used mainly for local travel, it will also serve as the fastest train from stations like Leighton Buzzard into London.

Since being originally introduced as a service between Rugby and Gatwick Airport, the through service to the West London line, currently operated hourly by Southern only between Milton Keynes Central and South Croydon, has seen strong growth. In addition to allowing more direct access to locations in West London, including the Westfield shopping centre at Shepherd's Bush, it allows interchange with a variety of services to destinations across the south east without the need to pass through central London. We understand that growing usage of this service would justify an increase in frequency to half-hourly over at least part of the route, which would further increase its utility. Extending the Sunday service north of Watford and south of Clapham Junction would also appear justified in light of the obvious leisure and shopping demand on the route. While ideally we would like to see this service run through to Northampton once again, there may be more productive uses of available line capacity. However, it would be very useful if this service was able to once again serve Gatwick Airport, a major destination, avoiding passengers from Northampton having to make two changes to make such a trip.

By 2017, it is anticipated that the East-West Rail project will re-open the line from Bletchley to Bicester and Aylesbury to passenger trains. New hourly services are proposed from Milton Keynes Central:

- Hourly to Bletchley, Winslow, Bicester Town, Water Eaton Parkway, Oxford, Didcot Parkway and Reading
- Hourly to Bletchley, Winslow, Aylesbury Vale Parkway, Aylesbury, Little Kimble, Monks Risborough, Princes Risborough, High Wycombe and onward to London Marylebone.

Ideally, we would like to see some of these services extended to Northampton, but in the absence of such a through service for Northampton travellers to gain the benefits of access to these destinations, it is essential that there are good connections with the new trains at Milton Keynes Central and also with the other trains serving Bletchley which will provide a half-hourly service from that station towards Oxford and Reading, and two trains per hour to Bedford.

Being almost equidistant between London and Birmingham, Northampton also sees heavy movements into Birmingham and other West Midlands destinations, including Birmingham Airport and the National Exhibition Centre. There is also significant travel into Northampton from this direction. While the overall market is not large enough to justify a two-tier service from Northampton to Birmingham in the same way as for London, the existing service is an uneasy compromise as far as travel within the West Midlands is concerned. Because of restrictions on line capacity between Coventry and Birmingham, the Northampton service is forced to act as a local service over this section.

Ideally this service should be split into two, a Northampton – Birmingham service operating as fast as possible and only calling at key destinations (Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry and Birmingham International), and a more frequent local service serving all the stations between Coventry and Birmingham.



One of the reasons for including a London – Crewe service in the London Midland franchise was to address the difficulties which Northampton faces through the lack of a direct Inter-City service to destinations in the North-West, and also offered good connections to destinations in the East Midlands via Nuneaton or Tamworth. The County Council is very disappointed that London Midland have decided to re-route this service away from Northampton, and that this change has been permitted. The County Council will encourage London Midland and future franchise operators to restore this service and to market the many opportunities that it afforded for easy travel to a variety of destinations, which were very poorly understood by potential travellers.

The problem of accessing key destinations in the north-west such as Liverpool and Manchester from Northampton is exacerbated by the limited number of trains to such destinations which call at Rugby, and the fact that fares policy has been changed to penalise people travelling from Northampton northwards via Milton Keynes. While there are a number of ways this problem can be addressed, we will continue to press for an improved service to be provided which minimises the number of connections and offers an attractive journey time.

Policy RAIL 7

The minimum train service at Northampton station should be:

- At least a half-hourly fast service to London Euston, stopping only at Milton Keynes Central, and reaching London in around 45 minutes.
 - ~ With additional peak commuter services to match capacity
- At least a half-hourly semi-fast service to Wolverton, Milton Keynes Central, Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction and London Euston.
- Good connections for services via the West London line to South Croydon
 - ~ On Monday to Saturday this service should be increased to half-hourly frequency and extended to Gatwick Airport
 - ~ The Sunday service should be extended to run between Milton Keynes Central and Gatwick Airport.
- Good connections at Milton Keynes Central and Bletchley with future east-west rail services to Oxford, Reading, Aylesbury and High Wycombe.
- At least a half-hourly service to Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street, reaching Birmingham in around 50 minutes
- At least an hourly through service to Rugby, Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe
- Hourly connections to Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow with no more than one change of train and with journey time no more than the current journey times from those stations to London Euston.
- Hourly connections to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield with no more than one change of train at Nuneaton or Tamworth



Although acting as a railhead for Daventry and a wide area of rural Northamptonshire, Long Buckby station is not used by as many people as Northampton station, and cannot reasonably be expected to be served by as wide a range of train services. In particular, some services from London can be expected to terminate at Northampton. However, the significant growth in patronage since regular through services to London were restored and the improved service provided to Birmingham shows the importance of a good train service at this station.

From a Long Buckby perspective, it would probably be ideal if the fast trains from London to Northampton were all extended northwards. However, depending on the full timetable this could deny places like Wolverton and Leighton Buzzard of a through service to Birmingham. It may therefore be preferable that of the one train an hour extending north of Northampton is a fast train from London and the other is a semi-fast train calling at stations like Wolverton and Leighton Buzzard.

Policy RAIL 8

The minimum train service at Long Buckby station should be:

- At least a half-hourly service between Northampton and Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street, reaching Birmingham in around 40 minutes.
- At least two trains per hour to London, with at least one train stopping only at Milton Keynes Central and London Euston to reach London in around 65 minutes
~ Additional fast through trains to/from London to operate at peak commuting times.
- Good connections for all other destinations listed in Policy 7 (Northampton).

Although located just outside the county, Rugby and Milton Keynes Central stations are used by many Northamptonshire residents living in the north-west and south of the county respectively. Being located directly on the West Coast Main Line, they enjoy a faster service to a wider range of destinations than is the case for Northampton.

Although located on the West Coast Main Line, Rugby is served by a relatively limited number of fast services. At present, the main call by fast services throughout the day is by an hourly service between London Euston and Birmingham New Street which offers faster journeys, but no wider range of destinations than is offered by other services. To provide an attractive service for Rugby, we believe there need to be two fast trains per hour to London, and that Anglo-Scottish services should call at Rugby to serve both the town itself and to provide connections from Northampton, Milton Keynes and other places to the south.



Policy RAIL 9

The minimum train service at Rugby station should be:

- At least a half-hourly non-stop service to London Euston, reaching London in less than 50 minutes.
- At least a half-hourly service to Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street.
- At least a half-hourly service to Long Buckby and Northampton
~ At least an hourly service extended to Milton Keynes Central and London Euston
- At least an hourly through service to Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe
- At least an hourly through service to Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow
- Hourly connections to Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, with no more than one change of train and with journey time no more than the current journey times from those stations to London Euston.
- Hourly connections to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield with no more than one change of train at Nuneaton or Tamworth.

Being served by a wide range of services, Milton Keynes is used by more than twice as many people as Northampton. As well as being the railhead for much of South Northamptonshire, it is also used by many people from the south side of Northampton, or those seeking access to destinations which cannot easily be reached from other stations.

Our policy for Milton Keynes Central broadly reflects the current range of services and those which are expected to be provided in 2017 with the opening of East-West Rail. However, in line with our policy for Northampton, we have also set out our aspiration for a much improved service of both fast and semi-fast trains towards London, and for good connections to key destinations which do not enjoy a through service.

Policy RAIL 10

The minimum train service at Milton Keynes Central station should be:

- A quarter-hourly non-stop service to London Euston, reaching London in less than 35 minutes.
- A half-hourly semi-fast service to Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction and London Euston.
- An hourly through service via the West London line to South Croydon
~ This service should be increased to half-hourly frequency (at least south of Watford Junction) and extended to Gatwick Airport
- An hourly fast service to Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street
~ With additional trains at peak times
- Four trains per hour to Northampton (half-hourly fast service and half-hourly semi-fast service calling at Wolverton), with the fast services extended alternately to:
~ Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street

~ Rugby, Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe

- An hourly through service to Stoke-on-Trent, Stockport and Manchester Piccadilly
- Hourly through services or connections to Chester, Liverpool, Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow with no more than one change of train and with journey time no more than the current journey times from those stations to London Euston.
- Hourly connections to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield with no more than one change of train.

Wolverton station is used by passengers from a number of villages in South Northamptonshire. This is either because it is their nearest station, or because it is easier to get a seat compared to boarding at Milton Keynes. Our policy for train services at Wolverton reflects our aspirations for both Northampton and Milton Keynes stations.

Policy RAIL 11

The minimum train service at Wolverton station should be:

- A half-hourly semi-fast service to Milton Keynes Central, Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction and London Euston.
~ With additional peak commuter trains running non-stop south of Milton Keynes Central.
- A half-hourly service to Northampton with at least one train per hour extended to Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street
- Good connections for all other destinations listed in policy 10 (Milton Keynes Central).

Major reconstruction of London Euston station is planned to enable the station to accommodate High Speed Rail services. Past experience from West Coast Route Modernisation showed that rail services from Northampton suffered for a lengthy period with, for example, the service to Birmingham being reduced to hourly and many rail journeys on Sundays being rendered impractical due to the time taken by rail replacement buses.

The growth in travel means that reductions in Northampton's rail service would have an even more severe effect today. While we understand that some disruptions to services will be necessary while Euston is rebuilt, advantage needs to be taken of the planned expansion of the station so that new platforms can be brought into operation before old ones are taken out of use, and interruption to services confined to the short periods when operations are being relocated from one area of the station to another.

Transport for London has raised concerns about the ability of the Underground to cope with the numbers of people who will arrive at Euston by High Speed Rail. As the reconstruction of the station will bring the concourse closer to Euston Road, it seems likely that reconstruction of the existing Underground station will be necessary, and this may provide an opportunity to incorporate Euston Square station, improving connections to the Circle and Metropolitan lines.

However, it has been suggested that further improvements such as Crossrail 2 (a new underground line across London) will be necessary to accommodate the expected demand, particularly once HS2 is extended to Manchester and Leeds.

Policy RAIL 12

We will expect the existing frequency, journey times and hours of operation of services to Northampton and Long Buckby to be maintained during reconstruction work at London Euston station to accommodate the proposed High Speed Rail line. Any impact on services should be for the minimum period possible.

We will expect adequate capacity to be provided on the Underground so that Northamptonshire travellers do not experience unacceptable levels of crowding once High Speed Rail services run into Euston.

Midland Main Line

A long-standing challenge of passenger services on the Midland Main Line has been how best to serve destinations north of East Midlands Parkway, where the line splits into a number of routes, and also how to provide fast services to the big cities while also serving the intermediate stations. For many years Kettering and Wellingborough had a rather poor service, while Corby lost its passenger service completely.

One of the big successes of the early years of privatisation was the introduction of an improved timetable offering a half-hourly service calling at Wellingborough and Kettering. These trains continued alternately to either Derby or Nottingham, but offered cross-platform connections at Leicester so that it was possible to reach Derby or Nottingham every half-hour, and Sheffield hourly.

Alongside the re-opening of Corby station in February 2009, a revised service pattern was introduced which inter alia helped to provide more seats for passengers from Kettering and Wellingborough and faster journey times to London from stations further north. However, one of the disadvantages of this timetable has been the reduction in the service to Leicester to hourly and the loss of a regular through service to Derby.

While the principal destination for journeys from Northamptonshire's Midland Main Line stations is London St Pancras, there are also strong flows to the East Midlands cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby, as well as the other large towns and airports on the route. Interchange with Thameslink services to the south, at Leicester with services to Birmingham, Peterborough and East Anglia and at Derby with Cross-Country services to the North-East and Scotland opens up a wide range of destinations for business and leisure trips.



The basis of our policy for services to Kettering and Wellingborough is for the existing half-hourly semi-fast service to be supplemented by a fast service providing one of the stations with an hourly non-stop to London. This is seen as essential for the economic growth of the area. To the north, the restoration of a half-hourly service to Leicester, and the provision of through services to key destinations not already served regularly are seen as necessary to ensure the better connectivity which will support local prosperity.

Policy RAIL 13

The minimum train service at Kettering and Wellingborough stations should be:

- At least an hourly non-stop service from one of the stations to London St Pancras
- At least a half-hourly service to Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and London St Pancras.
- At least a half-hourly service to Market Harborough and Leicester
- At least an hourly through service to Corby, Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby, Nottingham, Chesterfield and Sheffield
- An improved service to Oakham and Melton Mowbray
- Good connections for Leeds, York and Newcastle with no more than one change of train required.
- Good connections at Bedford with future East-West rail services

The double-tracking of the line between Kettering and Corby, announced as part of the High Level Output Specification for Control Period 5 should remove constraints on the timetabling of train services between London and Corby, and in particular remove the need for a gap in the train service to accommodate a freight service over the line, allowing an hourly service to operate throughout the day for the first time. As patronage develops further, we would hope to see through services to London provided in the evenings and on Sundays, rather than relying on connections at Kettering. These services should be additional to existing service provision at Kettering and Wellingborough, and not predicate any reduction in services to other destinations.

Although the service provided beyond Corby to Oakham and Melton Mowbray is not a franchise commitment, we would like to see this service developed further with a more regular service throughout the day. In particular, we hope that the announcement of electrification on the Midland Main Line, which does not include the line north of Corby, will not require withdrawal of this service.

As an alternative option, a south to east curve at Manton junction has been suggested as a means of achieving direct services between Corby and Peterborough. Our understanding is that because no such curve has existed in the past, the cost of providing such a link would be considerable, and a significant level of traffic would be necessary to justify the cost. However, if this were to become viable in the future, the provision of through services to Peterborough could be considered.

Policy RAIL 14

The minimum train service at Corby station should be:

- At least an hourly service to Kettering, Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and London St Pancras.
~ Including through services in the evenings and on Sundays
- An improved service to Oakham, Melton Mowbray and beyond to Derby or Nottingham.
- Good connections at Kettering with northbound Midland Main Line services
~No more than one change (at Kettering) to reach Market Harborough, Leicester, Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby, Nottingham, Chesterfield and Sheffield
~No more than two changes to reach Leeds, York and Newcastle
- Good connections at Bedford with future East-West Rail services

Market Harborough station is used by residents from the north of the county to access rail services. Our aspirations for services from Market Harborough are in line with our aspirations for Kettering and Wellingborough.

Policy RAIL 15

The minimum train service at Market Harborough station should be:

- At least a half-hourly service to Kettering, Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and London St Pancras.
- At least a half-hourly service to Leicester
- At least an hourly service to Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby and Nottingham
- Good connections for Chesterfield, Sheffield, Leeds, York and Newcastle with no more than one change of train required.
- Good connections at Bedford with future East-West rail services

Peterborough – Leicester line

The Peterborough – Leicester line passes through Northamptonshire for just over a mile to the north of Easton-on-the-Hill. More pointedly, Northamptonshire residents will access the service at Stamford or possibly Oakham stations. Carrying hourly passenger services between Birmingham and Stansted Airport, this route provides key connections to a number of major destinations, but for a long-distance service the journey time is relatively slow, and we would welcome proposals to improve the journey time for passenger services on the route.



Policy RAIL 16

The minimum train service at Oakham and Stamford stations should be:

- At least an hourly service to Birmingham, Nuneaton, Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Peterborough, Ely, Cambridge and Stansted Airport.
- Good connections at hub stations such as Peterborough and Leicester for onward travel to London and other key destinations.
- An improved service from London St Pancras and stations to Corby to Oakham and continuing to Melton Mowbray, and beyond to Derby or Nottingham.

Opportunities should be taken for improved journey times on this route.

East Coast Main Line

Although passing to the east of the County, the East Coast Main Line is the most convenient rail route for some residents in the east of the county and is also accessed by people from across the county making long-distance journeys.

Our policies for Peterborough and Huntingdon stations broadly reflect current service patterns for key journey opportunities, and reflect the importance of both key destinations such as London and the need for Peterborough to be served by services connecting to the range of destinations on the rail routes serving the city.

Policy RAIL 17

The minimum train service at Peterborough station should be:

- At least a half-hourly fast service to London Kings Cross
- At least an hourly through service to Doncaster, Leeds, York, Newcastle, Leicester, Lincoln, Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Cambridge, Stansted Airport and Norwich
- At least a 2- hourly through service to Edinburgh and Ipswich

The minimum train service at Huntingdon station should be:

- At least an hourly through service to London Kings Cross in less than 65 minutes.
- At least a half-hourly service to Peterborough, with good connections for other destinations served from that station.

Network issues

In addition to the above specific policies, we have some aspirations for rail travel which apply to all service groups.

As rail patronage continues to grow, many trains will need to get longer. This does not only apply at conventional peak times, when most people are making their journeys to and from work. Trains can be very busy at key shopping times, while pricing policies designed to discourage peak travel can create artificial peaks around the first or last trains on which off-peak tickets are available. Vibrant evening economies can create significant demand for travel and trains can already be full and standing leaving London well into the evening.

Major events such as Christmas shopping and major exhibitions (at, for example, the NEC) can create seasonal peaks at otherwise off-peak times. Of course, the railways cannot be expected to have extra rolling stock available for one-off events, but many of these events occur at times such as weekends when rolling stock is spare outside the Monday – Friday peak. The railway industry should be flexible enough to respond to these events and run longer trains when the rolling stock is available.

As people's patterns of living change, timetables need to respond. In line with moves towards a 24-hour railway, there should be examination of the timing of first and last trains (including Sundays) so that these align to factors like evening economies, Sunday shopping hours and flight times from airports.

Policy RAIL 18

The County Council will encourage the rail industry to plan their timetables so that:

- a) First and last trains should be scheduled around factors such as evening economies, Sunday shopping hours and flight times from airports; and
- b) Where rolling stock is available, longer trains are operated to meet the demand for travel to major planned events.

Because Northamptonshire stations are not served by the fastest inter-city services on any of the main lines which pass through the county, there is a need for people to change to make many journeys. However, our timetables are rarely planned to facilitate journeys which require connections, particularly between the services of more than one train operator. A number of European countries have developed timetables based on regular-interval services timed so that they connect at hub stations. The rail industry has recently used the Swiss Taktfahrplan timetable planning software on a number of occasions to examine optimum timetable solutions for particular routes. However, this approach is by its nature designed to examine a whole network,

and we believe that it is worth the rail industry examining the benefits and costs of adopting such an approach in Britain.

Policy RAIL 19

The County Council will encourage the Department for Transport to examine the benefits and costs of adopting a regular-interval connecting timetable in Britain, and in particular its use to facilitate easier connection opportunities for travel to and from Northamptonshire stations.



Rail Stations

Northamptonshire has six railway stations on the national network. Four of these are located in the large towns of Corby, Kettering, Northampton and Wellingborough; two, Kings Sutton and Long Buckby are located on the edge of villages, although Long Buckby acts as a rail-head for the town of Daventry.

At all stations across the county, we have an important role in ensuring that the stations are easily accessible by foot or on cycle, and that good interchange is provided with bus services where a service is provided.

Corby

Corby station was newly constructed for re-opening of the line in February 2009. It is therefore a modern station, equipped to current standards in terms of accessibility within the station, and with scope for further traffic growth in patronage.

The recently announced restoration of double track to the line between Kettering and Corby may require the construction of a second platform together with an accessible footbridge, and it is expected that if necessary these would be funded by Network Rail as part of their investment programme.

The station is served by a number of bus services from different areas of the town and surrounding communities. Corby Borough Council has aspirations for improved pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre. Further details of how this may be achieved will be included in our forthcoming Corby Transport Strategy.

Kettering

A distinctive listed Victorian structure, Kettering station has been extensively modernised, including the provision of lifts to all platforms.

As part of the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan, there are proposals for comprehensive development in the Station Quarter, including 32,000m² of commercial office space, a hotel, a transport interchange and public square, as well as a limited amount of housing and a new multi-storey car park on the west side of the rail line.

As part of wider traffic management proposals in the town centre, we have proposals to improve access by vehicles, cycles and pedestrians to the station area. We would also welcome any proposals for improved bus



service links to the station, which are currently minimal. Further details will be found in our forthcoming Kettering Transport Strategy.

Kings Sutton

Kings Sutton station is located on the edge of the village. Facilities at the unmanned station are limited, although waiting shelters are provided on both platforms, and a new footbridge has been constructed in recent years.

The platforms are currently only able to accommodate 5-coach trains, preventing 6-coach trains from calling, and lengthening will be essential to enable the station to be served by an adequate service of trains in future. An extension of the station car park, for which land appears available, would also help to accommodate additional demand.



Long Buckby

Long Buckby station is located a short distance from the village, alongside the road to Daventry. Facilities are limited, although the station is manned for limited periods. Waiting shelters are provided on both platforms, but these are located on an embankment and only accessible by stairs. Stagecoach have recently introduced an hourly bus service from Daventry which stops close to the station entrance.

Improvements to the ambience of the station, including a permanent building and better access to the platforms would be a welcome development, and the County Council would consider co-funding such an improvement alongside any funding from the rail industry such as the Department for Transport's *Access for All* programme. An extension of the car park may also be necessary to accommodate further patronage, although this would require the acquisition or lease of further land.

Northampton

Northampton station is located on the western edge of the town centre, alongside the main A4500 road at West Bridge. The station is built on the site of the medieval Castle (the remains of which include both a listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and the surrounding area is earmarked for regeneration/commercial/office proposals in the Northampton Central Area Action Plan and forms part of the Northampton Waterside Enterprise



Zone. The current station building was constructed in the 1960s alongside electrification of the line, and no longer meets requirements. The County Council, together with West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Network Rail and government have committed to funding a new station building, which should be completed in 2014. This will provide a much improved gateway to the town, including direct pedestrian access to West Bridge.

Redevelopment of Northampton railway station, known locally as Castle Station is pivotal to the future prosperity of the area, providing a business and communications hub for the whole county. However, studies show that Northampton Station is already at passenger handling capacity during peak hours, while the station building and its associated facilities are out-of-date, and a constraint to economic growth.



Phase one will see the provision of a new station building, which would be around twice the size of the current building. Whilst, later phases may include a 1270 space multi-storey car park connected to the new station via a footbridge. This would free up land for a 28,000 sq m new commercial development on the existing car park site.

Funding for the initial phase of the stations redevelopment has come from Central Government who have pledged to invest £10m in the station. Other funding partners, including Network Rail and Northamptonshire County Council, will meet the remainder of the £20m development costs.

Wellingborough

Of similar vintage to Kettering station, although somewhat smaller, this listed station has been similarly modernised and more recently benefitted from a new footbridge including installation of lifts giving access to all three platforms. Future four-tracking of the line through Wellingborough may require restoration of the currently disused fourth platform, together with extension of the footbridge/lift facility.



There are proposals for major development immediately to the east of Wellingborough station at Stanton Cross, which could transform the station area. A new eastern station entrance would be

provided giving direct access to the commercial development proposed at 'Station Island'. It is also anticipated that the major bus route giving access to the development will stop immediately in front of the existing station entrance, providing not only bus access to the development, but also a much improved bus service to and from the town centre than is provided at present.

Policy RAIL 20

The County Council will work to improve pedestrian and cycle access to Northamptonshire rail stations, encourage all stations to be served by bus services and work to provide bus interchange facilities where they are. The provision of electric charging infrastructure in car parks should be examined as wider electric car infrastructure is rolled out.

The County Council will support and/or encourage the rail industry to undertake further development at Northamptonshire's stations, including:

Corby

- Possible second platform
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre
- Increased car parking provision as patronage grows.

Kettering

- Improved access to the station

Kings Sutton

- Lengthening of platforms to 6 or 8 coach length
- Extension of car park

Long Buckby

- Permanent station building and improved waiting facilities
- Improved access to platforms
- Taxi rank and possible extension of car park

Northampton

- Comprehensive redevelopment of station area
 - ~ Including new station building
 - ~ Multi-storey Car Park

Wellingborough

- Possible restoration of fourth platform
- New eastern entrance to station as part of Stanton Cross development
- Improved bus service linking with Stanton Cross and town centre

New stations

The re-opening of Corby station in 2009 was a major achievement, restoring passenger services to what had been the largest station in Britain without a station. Proposals have been made for new stations at a number of locations on both the Midland Main Line and at different locations on either the West Coast Main Line or Northampton Loop which could act as a parkway station for Northampton.

While new stations can have significant advantages for the localities concerned, stopping at new stations lengthens existing journey times, and can create line capacity problems, so any such proposals need to be carefully considered. The construction of the proposed high speed rail line may relieve some of these constraints by removing existing train services, and make new stations a more practical proposition.

To succeed, any new station will need to demonstrate a positive business case, have a realistic chance of obtaining funding and have benefits to the local community which outweigh any localised disbenefits in terms of additional road traffic generation or other negative impacts.

Policy RAIL 21

We will examine in more details proposals for stations at the following locations:

- A new station at Blisworth or Weedon on the West Coast Main Line
- Station sites south of Northampton on the Northampton Loop
- New stations at Desborough and Irchester on the Midland Main Line

The County Council will support proposals for new stations where they offer good value for money, there is a realistic chance of obtaining funding and a positive impact on the local community.



Rail Freight

Northamptonshire is crossed by some of Britain's major rail freight routes. These are used heavily by inter-modal traffic which is expected to continue to exhibit strong growth in future, whereas some of the historic bulk markets (such as power station coal) are forecast to reduce.

The County Council supports further development and growth of the rail freight market. In order to accommodate additional trains, further investment in the network may be necessary, such as new freight loops at Desborough on the Midland Main Line. The recently announced double-tracking of the Line between Kettering and Corby will also enhance the utility of the line through Corby and Oakham as an alternative for freight traffic to the route through Leicester. The restoration of the fourth track southwards from Kettering South Junction to Sharnbrook may be necessary to accommodate further traffic growth.

The ability of the rail network to accommodate large containers is limited by structural clearance. Currently all routes through the county except the Midland Main Line are cleared to W10 loading gauge. The County Council welcomes the announcement to include clearance to the larger W12 loading gauge of both the Midland Main Line and the Southampton – Coventry route as part of electrification.

Policy RAIL 22

The County Council supports measures to increase the use of the county's rail network for freight, including the provision of additional track capacity (such as loops) and clearance to accommodate large containers.

Rail Freight Terminals

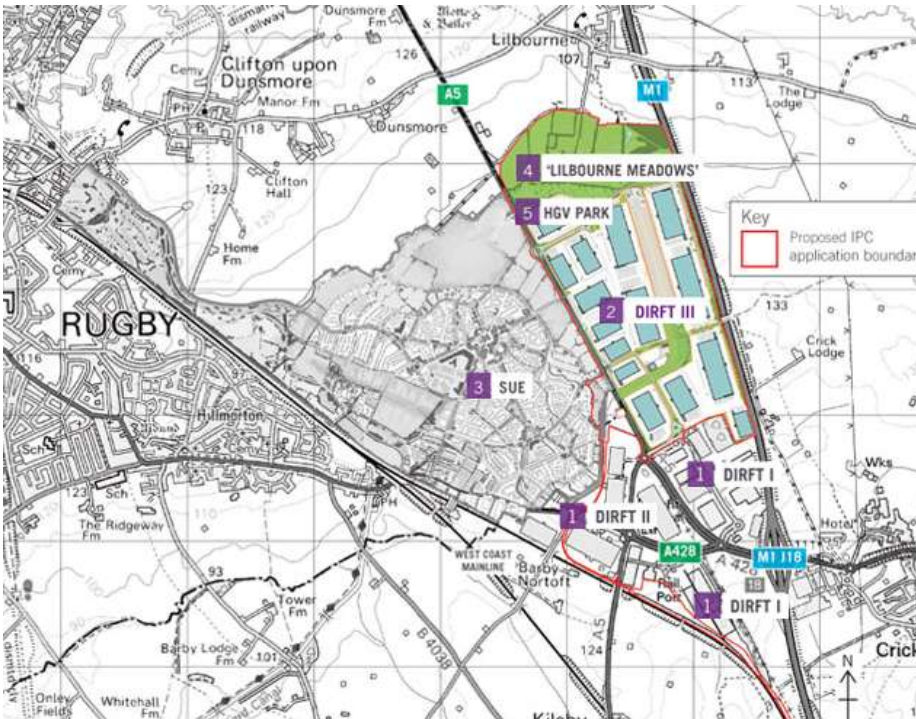
There are currently three rail freight terminals in Northamptonshire.

DIRFT

Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) is a rail-road intermodal freight terminal with an associated warehousing estate; the facility is located at the junctions between the M1 motorway, A5 and A428 roads with a rail connection from the Northampton loop of the West Coast Main Line. An expansion of the terminal (DIRFT 2) is currently under construction, and a further phase (DIRFT 3) is proposed to expand the site across the border into Warwickshire, involving the construction of replacement rail facilities.

DIRFT 2 - In 2005 planning permission was granted for a rail connected 130 acres westward expansion of the original site with a built ground area of over 1,900,000 sq. ft. The DIRFT 2 expansion was designed for rail connected warehousing allowing transfer between sea or channel tunnel born rail-freight and road transport or warehouse storage.

Tesco acquired an 840,000 sq. ft. grocery distribution centre in 2011, constructed by VolkerFitzpatrick (main contractor), construction work was completed in September 2011. As part of the development, a rail tunnel was built under the A5 road to connect DIRFT 2 to the rail network via the original DIRFT rail port.



DIRFT 3 - A further 7.5 million sq. ft. extension, DIRFT 3, is proposed for construction on the former Rugby radio station site to the northwest of the current development. The proposal also included a large area 170 acres of green space, named Lilbourne Meadows. The development is a joint venture between ProLogis and Rugby Radio Station Limited Partnership. The DIRFT 3 site would also be rail connected, with over 7,500,000 sq. ft. of

warehousing over 400 acres of land plus an 8.6 acre HGV parking site. A related development is the Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) built to the west of DIRFT as a suburb of Rugby - with over 6000 homes planned.

Corby

Corby International Rail Freight Terminal has been used for delivery of automotive traffic, but is not currently receiving any deliveries by rail. The site has potential to be used for intermodal traffic, particularly once the Midland Main Line is cleared for W12 loading gauge.

The Tata Steel site at Corby is rail connected and sees limited rail traffic.

Wellingborough

Sidings north of Wellingborough station have been used in recent years as a base for engineer's trains for the London Underground network. Recently, these sidings have also been used for aggregate traffic, and may have scope for further use.

Policy RAIL 23

The County Council supports further development of rail freight terminals subject to appropriate planning considerations and the provision of appropriate highway access.

Rail Infrastructure

Journey times and capacity improvements

Raising line speed has the ability to reduce journey times, and signalling improvements can help to reduce the headways between trains, enabling more traffic to be accommodated on a route.

The County Council strongly supports proposals for upgraded infrastructure to reduce journey times on the Midland Main Line. These include works in the Market Harborough, Leicester, Derby and Sheffield areas. It is currently unclear whether all of these works are included in the scope of the July 2012 High Level Output Specification, and if not the County Council will continue to lobby for their inclusion so that the additional implementation costs which will arise once the line is electrified will not be incurred.

The County Council also urges the rail industry to raise line speeds on the Northampton Loop to 100mph, costed in the West Coast Main Line Route Utilisation Study at £3million. As well as improving journey times to Northampton, this would reduce time penalties when Inter-City services are regularly diverted via Northampton as a result of engineering works or incidents.

Policy RAIL 24

The County Council supports improved journey time and line capacity through line speed and signalling improvements on the Midland Main Line and the Northampton Loop.

Electrification

The County Council welcomes the announcement in the July 2012 High Level Output Specification of electrification of the Midland Main Line from Bedford to Nottingham, Derby and Sheffield (including the line from Kettering to Corby) and of the Southampton to Nuneaton line which passes through Northamptonshire at Kings Sutton. Outside the county, re-opening and

electrification of the Oxford – Bletchley – Bedford line will help to create a through rail route from the East Midlands to Southampton. Electrification of these lines will make a valuable contribution to reducing rail industry costs, while also helping to tackle climate change through reducing carbon emissions.

The government has indicated that it sees potential for further electrification in Control Period 6 (2019-2024) which would include other key freight routes. The County Council sees considerable potential for the Felixstowe – Ipswich – Ely – Peterborough – Leicester – Birmingham route, including the connection from Corby to Manton Junction, to be electrified as part of this programme, as this route links a number of current (or planned) electrified routes and would enable a significant number of freight trains (as well as the Birmingham – Stansted Airport passenger service) to be electrically powered throughout their journey.

Policy RAIL 25

The County Council supports electrification of the Midland Main Line and the Southampton – Nuneaton and Oxford – Bedford routes and will press for the Felixstowe – Birmingham route to be included in further electrification plans for CP6.

Disused lines

In recent years, the County Council has examined the possibility of reopening the rail line between Northampton and Wellingborough, while the London – South Midlands Multi-Modal Study and local campaigners have looked at reopening the line from Northampton to Bedford. The consultation for this strategy has also generated proposals for reopening the Northampton to Market Harborough line and also a railway to Daventry (either by re-opening the old line from Weedon or a new link directly to the Northampton Loop).

While there are obstructions which would prevent the reconstruction of any of these lines on their original alignment, reopening of both would be possible, at a cost, possibly by using light rail technologies. While it is obvious that re-opening would bring benefits in terms of potential passengers, there is no evidence that this would come anywhere near generating a positive business case.

Although disused rail lines can provide very useful corridors for a variety of sustainable transport purposes, such as footpaths or cycleways, protecting them for rail use can create a significant cost for other development proposals, such as the need to bridge a line (at considerable cost) when there is no realistic chance of rail services in the near future. Non-rail transport uses for former rail corridors would be covered in other strategies which form part of the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan.



Policy RAIL 26

The County Council will only consider protecting disused rail lines for future rail use when there is a clear demonstration of both engineering viability and a current or future commercial business case for restoration of rail services.



Linking Policies to Objectives

The table below demonstrates how these policies contribute to the objectives of the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan and the corresponding six objectives of the Rail Strategy.

NTP Objectives	Rail Strategy Objectives	Policies
Fit for...the Future	The strategic connectivity offered by rail is important in making Northamptonshire an attractive place for growth to take place. Investment is also required to give more capacity appropriate to larger populations.	2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11,13,14, 15,17,18,19,21, 22
Fit for...the Community	The strategy will help to provide community leadership on rail issues.	1,2,3,12,26
Fit to...Choose	Making rail travel more appealing will give people more choice about how they choose to travel.	2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11,13,14 15,17,18,19,21, 24
Fit for...Economic Growth	An Improved rail service in Northants will make the county more attractive to business looking to invest in the area.	2,3,7,8,13,14, 18,19,20,21,22, 23,24,26
Fit for...the Environment	Increasing the proportion of passenger and freight movements by rail will reduce vehicle emissions that are harmful to the environment, as will more electrification.	2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11,13,14, 15,17,18,19,22, 23
Fit for...Best Value	We will seek to encourage the rail industry to make appropriate value for money investment in Northamptonshire's rail infrastructure and services, and will consider making a financial contribution to schemes where appropriate and affordable.	2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11,13,14, 15,17,20,21,22, 23,24,25

Appendix 1 - Summary of Policies:

Policy RAIL 1

- d) We will work with HS2 Limited, local communities and other agencies to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are included in the designs for the sections of the proposed High-Speed Rail Route within Northamptonshire.
- e) We will expect the impact on local communities from the construction of the proposed route to be kept to a minimum, particularly in relation to construction traffic.
- f) We will expect the connectivity of the main highway network and rights of way network to be maintained once the line is complete, and closures during the construction period to be minimised.

Policy RAIL 2

We will expect the proposed High Speed Rail stations at Birmingham International/Airport and in the East Midlands to enable Northamptonshire travellers to access High Speed Rail services to a range of destinations in the north of England and Scotland.

Policy RAIL 3

We will expect that following opening of the proposed High Speed Rail network, there will be no reduction in the range of destinations which can be reached from Northamptonshire without a change of trains and that released capacity will be used to improve the frequency and journey times of trains serving Northamptonshire stations.

Policy RAIL 4

The minimum train service at King's Sutton station should be:

- A standard 2-hourly daily service to London Marylebone
~ Enhanced to hourly during Monday to Friday morning peaks for travel to London and evening peaks for travel from Marylebone
- A standard 2-hourly daily service to Oxford
~ Including journeys to provide convenient commuter trains on Monday to Friday for those working in Oxford
- As close as possible to an hourly service to Banbury, combining separate 2-hourly services from London Marylebone and Oxford.
- A through train in Monday – Friday morning peaks for commuters to Birmingham and corresponding evening peak return timed conveniently for those working in Birmingham
~ Convenient connections providing hourly journey opportunities with no more than one change to/from Birmingham at all other times.

Policy RAIL 5

The minimum train service at Banbury station should be:

- A ½-hourly daily service between Birmingham Moor Street and London Marylebone
~ Providing at least an hourly service to intermediate stations at Solihull, Warwick Parkway, Warwick, Leamington, Bicester North, Princes Risborough and High Wycombe.
- Hourly services on the Manchester – Birmingham – Reading – Bournemouth and Newcastle – Sheffield – Birmingham – Reading corridors, calling at principal stations en route.
~ These two services should combine to give as close as possible a ½ hourly service between Birmingham and Reading
- A 2-hourly through service to Stratford-upon-Avon
- A 2-hourly local service to Kings Sutton, Heyford, Tackley and Oxford
~ Combining with additional stops in Marylebone services to give as close as possible an hourly service to Kings Sutton

Policy RAIL 6

The minimum train service at Bicester North station should be:

- A ½-hourly daily service to High Wycombe and London Marylebone
- An hourly daily service to Birmingham Moor Street, Solihull, Warwick, Leamington, Banbury, Haddenham & Thame Parkway and Princes Risborough.

Following the completion of the Evergreen 3 and East-West Rail projects, the minimum train service at Bicester Town station should be:

- A ½-hourly daily service to Oxford and London Marylebone
- A ½-hourly daily service from Reading, Didcot and Oxford running to Bletchley and then alternately to Bedford and Milton Keynes Central.

Policy RAIL 7

The minimum train service at Northampton station should be:

- At least a half-hourly fast service to London Euston, stopping only at Milton Keynes Central, and reaching London in around 45 minutes.
~ With additional peak commuter services to match capacity
- At least a half-hourly semi-fast service to Wolverton, Milton Keynes Central, Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction and London Euston.
- Good connections for services via the West London line to South Croydon
~ On Monday to Saturday this service should be increased to half-hourly frequency and extended to Gatwick Airport
~ The Sunday service should be extended to run between Milton Keynes Central and Gatwick Airport.
- Good connections at Milton Keynes Central and Bletchley with future east-west rail services to Oxford, Reading, Aylesbury and High Wycombe.

- At least a half-hourly service to Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street, reaching Birmingham in around 50 minutes
- At least an hourly through service to Rugby, Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe
- Hourly connections to Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow with no more than one change of train and with journey time no more than the current journey times from those stations to London Euston.
- Hourly connections to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield with no more than one change of train at Nuneaton or Tamworth

Policy RAIL 8

The minimum train service at Long Buckby station should be:

- At least a half-hourly service between Northampton and Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street, reaching Birmingham in around 40 minutes.
- At least two trains per hour to London, with at least one train stopping only at Milton Keynes Central and London Euston to reach London in around 65 minutes
~ Additional fast through trains to/from London to operate at peak commuting times.
- Good connections for all other destinations listed in Policy 7 (Northampton).

Policy RAIL 9

The minimum train service at Rugby station should be:

- At least a half-hourly non-stop service to London Euston, reaching London in less than 50 minutes.
- At least a half-hourly service to Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street.
- At least a half-hourly service to Long Buckby and Northampton
~ At least an hourly service extended to Milton Keynes Central and London Euston
- At least an hourly through service to Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe
- At least an hourly through service to Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow
- Hourly connections to Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, with no more than one change of train and with journey time no more than the current journey times from those stations to London Euston.
- Hourly connections to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield with no more than one change of train at Nuneaton or Tamworth.

Policy RAIL 10

The minimum train service at Milton Keynes Central station should be:

- A quarter-hourly non-stop service to London Euston, reaching London in less than 35 minutes.
- A half-hourly semi-fast service to Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction and London Euston.
- An hourly through service via the West London line to South Croydon
~ This service should be increased to half-hourly frequency (at least south of Watford Junction) and extended to Gatwick Airport
- An hourly fast service to Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street
~ With additional trains at peak times
- Four trains per hour to Northampton (half-hourly fast service and half-hourly semi-fast service calling at Wolverton), with the fast services extended alternately to:
~ Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street
~ Rugby, Nuneaton, Atherstone, Tamworth, Lichfield Trent Valley, Rugeley Trent Valley, Stafford and Crewe
- An hourly through service to Stoke-on-Trent, Stockport and Manchester Piccadilly
- Hourly through services or connections to Chester, Liverpool, Preston, Lancaster, Carlisle and Glasgow with no more than one change of train and with journey time no more than the current journey times from those stations to London Euston.
- Hourly connections to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield with no more than one change of train.

Policy RAIL 11

The minimum train service at Wolverton station should be:

- A half-hourly semi-fast service to Milton Keynes Central, Bletchley, Leighton Buzzard, Berkhamsted, Hemel Hempstead, Watford Junction and London Euston.
~ With additional peak commuter trains running non-stop south of Milton Keynes Central.
- A half-hourly service to Northampton with at least one train per hour extended to Long Buckby, Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham International and Birmingham New Street
- Good connections for all other destinations listed in policy 10 (Milton Keynes Central).

Policy RAIL 12

We will expect the existing frequency, journey times and hours of operation of services to Northampton and Long Buckby to be maintained during reconstruction work at London Euston station to accommodate the proposed High Speed Rail line. Any impact on services should be for the minimum period possible.

We will expect adequate capacity to be provided on the Underground so that Northamptonshire travellers do not experience unacceptable levels of crowding once High Speed Rail services run into Euston.

Policy RAIL 13

The minimum train service at Kettering and Wellingborough stations should be:

- At least an hourly non-stop service from one of the stations to London St Pancras
- At least a half-hourly service to Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and London St Pancras.
- At least a half-hourly service to Market Harborough and Leicester
- At least an hourly through service to Corby, Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby, Nottingham, Chesterfield and Sheffield
- An improved service to Oakham and Melton Mowbray
- Good connections for Leeds, York and Newcastle with no more than one change of train required.
- Good connections at Bedford with future East-West rail services

Policy RAIL 14

The minimum train service at Corby station should be:

- At least an hourly service to Kettering, Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and London St Pancras.
~ Including through services in the evenings and on Sundays
- An improved service to Oakham, Melton Mowbray and beyond to Derby or Nottingham.
- Good connections at Kettering with northbound Midland Main Line services
~No more than one change (at Kettering) to reach Market Harborough, Leicester, Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby, Nottingham, Chesterfield and Sheffield
~No more than two changes to reach Leeds, York and Newcastle
- Good connections at Bedford with future East-West Rail services

Policy RAIL 15

The minimum train service at Market Harborough station should be:

- At least a half-hourly service to Kettering, Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway and London St Pancras.
- At least a half-hourly service to Leicester
- At least an hourly service to Loughborough, East Midlands Parkway, Derby and Nottingham
- Good connections for Chesterfield, Sheffield, Leeds, York and Newcastle with no more than one change of train required.
- Good connections at Bedford with future East-West rail services

Policy RAIL 16

The minimum train service at Oakham and Stamford stations should be:

- At least an hourly service to Birmingham, Nuneaton, Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Peterborough, Ely, Cambridge and Stansted Airport.
- Good connections at hub stations such as Peterborough and Leicester for onward travel to London and other key destinations.
- An improved service from London St Pancras and stations to Corby to Oakham and continuing to Melton Mowbray, and beyond to Derby or Nottingham.

Opportunities should be taken for improved journey times on this route.

Policy RAIL 17

The minimum train service at Peterborough station should be:

- At least a half-hourly fast service to London Kings Cross
- At least an hourly through service to Doncaster, Leeds, York, Newcastle, Leicester, Lincoln, Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Cambridge, Stansted Airport and Norwich
- At least a 2- hourly through service to Edinburgh and Ipswich

The minimum train service at Huntingdon station should be:

- At least an hourly through service to London Kings Cross in less than 65 minutes.
- At least a half-hourly service to Peterborough, with good connections for other destinations served from that station.

Policy RAIL 18

The County Council will encourage the rail industry to plan their timetables so that:

- c) First and last trains should be scheduled around factors such as evening economies, Sunday shopping hours and flight times from airports; and
- d) Where rolling stock is available, longer trains are operated to meet the demand for travel to major planned events.

Policy RAIL 19

The County Council will encourage the Department for Transport to examine the benefits and costs of adopting a regular-interval connecting timetable in Britain, and in particular its use to facilitate easier connection opportunities for travel to and from Northamptonshire stations.



Policy RAIL 20

The County Council will work to improve pedestrian and cycle access to Northamptonshire rail stations, encourage all stations to be served by bus services and work to provide bus interchange facilities where they are. The provision of electric charging infrastructure in car parks should be examined as wider electric car infrastructure is rolled out.

The County Council will support and/or encourage the rail industry to undertake further development at Northamptonshire's stations, including:

Corby

- Possible second platform
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre
- Increased car parking provision as patronage grows.

Kettering

- Improved access to the station

Kings Sutton

- Lengthening of platforms to 6 or 8 coach length
- Extension of car park

Long Buckby

- Permanent station building and improved waiting facilities
- Improved access to platforms
- Taxi rank and possible extension of car park

Northampton

- Comprehensive redevelopment of station area
 - ~ Including new station building
 - ~ Multi-storey Car Park

Wellingborough

- Possible restoration of fourth platform
- New eastern entrance to station as part of Stanton Cross development
- Improved bus service linking with Stanton Cross and town centre

Policy RAIL 21

We will examine in more details proposals for stations at the following locations:

- A new station at Blisworth or Weedon on the West Coast Main Line
- Station sites south of Northampton on the Northampton Loop
- New stations at Desborough and Irchester on the Midland Main Line

The County Council will support proposals for new stations where they offer good value for money, there is a realistic chance of obtaining funding and a positive impact on the local community.

Policy RAIL 22

The County Council supports measures to increase the use of the county's rail network for freight, including the provision of additional track capacity (such as loops) and clearance to accommodate large containers.

Policy RAIL 23

The County Council supports further development of rail freight terminals subject to appropriate planning considerations and the provision of appropriate highway access.

Policy RAIL 24

The County Council supports improved journey time and line capacity through line speed and signalling improvements on the Midland Main Line and the Northampton Loop.

Policy RAIL 25

The County Council supports electrification of the Midland Main Line and the Southampton – Nuneaton and Oxford – Bedford routes and will press for the Felixstowe – Birmingham route to be included in further electrification plans for CP6.

Policy RAIL 26

The County Council will only consider protecting disused rail lines for future rail use when there is a clear demonstration of both engineering viability and a current or future commercial business case for restoration of rail services.



(Blank Page)



Northamptonshire Rail Strategy

For more information please contact

LTPConsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk

