



North East Draft Transport Plan

Comments from Railfuture North East Branch

1. Introduction

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning, nationally and locally, for a bigger and better railway for passengers and freight.

Railfuture is a voluntary group, with 20,000 affiliated and individual members. Railfuture is not affiliated to or funded by train companies, political parties or trade unions, and all members have an equal say. It is not connected with or financed by train companies, political parties or trade unions. All members have an equal say.

These comments come from the North East Branch of Railfuture whose geographical area of interest covers not only the area detailed in this plan but extends to the Tees Valley and the line from Middlesbrough to Whitby. Our members have many years of experience in the field of public transport and have taken a keen interest in this plan.

We broadly welcome the Plan and agree with many of the proposals relating to both heavy rail and metro. On occasions, however, we think that the plan is not sufficiently ambitious and in places does not seem to be satisfactorily 'joined up'. We have faced some difficulty with the lack of detail in the plan that can make it difficult to fully understand the strategy that lies behind the individual elements. We would welcome the opportunity to further discuss both our reservations and proposals before the final version is published.

The current rail geography of the North East is unusual because of its domination by the ECML, a line that is mainly used for services that originate and terminate outside of the region. The ECML carries few local rail services and the fact that it is said to be congested, and is likely to become more so, presents real challenges in developing a local rail network. Our comments on the plan are initially structured around plans for the ECML and the lines (Durham Coast, Tyne Valley and Northumberland) that link to it at Newcastle. We then go on to look at a range of issues that either are touched on by the plan or should, in our opinion, be addressed in the plan.

2. The East Coast Mainline (ECML).

- 2.1 The ECML is clearly the main rail link to the 'outside' world, both north and south, and will need to be able to manage any increases in traffic that come from both HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail as well as increases in freight traffic that can be expected as the NE steps up to its role as the 'Energy Coast'. The current ECML in our area carries very little local traffic and is used, in the main, by either national or inter-regional services. The danger is that demands for better local services on the line are seen as subservient to other services. Inter-regional must not squeeze out intra-regional and local services. Whilst we believe that there could be some spare paths on the ECML it is clear that, given likely future demands, it will need to be 'decongested'. Given this, and the fact that the ECML is out of reach of many of the communities in NE Durham, we welcome the plans to re-open the Leamside Line and to make better use of the Stillington Freight line.
- 2.2 A re-opened Leamside offers many advantages including much improved access to the wider rail network for local communities, the possibility of opening up new freight markets, and as a diversionary route for the times when the ECML is not available. As such we think that the Leamside needs to be a '24 hour – 7 days a week' railway line.



We also note the possibilities of using a station at Belmont as a park and ride facility. It has ample land, good road and public transport connections. There are also new developments in the Bowburn area which would be well served by Leamside. A successful P & R facility could help to decongest parts of the A1(M) and help to improve air quality around the Tyne Bridge. Leamside offers possibility of new travel opportunities for numerous groups of people re employment access, further education facilities and leisure, plus the freight aspects as well. Overall a reinstated Leamside would make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the economy of the line's catchment area and beyond.

We say this to emphasise the point that Leamside should be seen as more than just a development that is required by the additional ECML traffic that will follow the development of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

We take the view that without a good network of local services the rail system won't get the ongoing political support it requires **and** many local communities will be forced to rely on road transport with all of its problems in terms of congestion and the environment. We also argue that a good local service is in the interest of longer distance services in that it provides feeder services into the wider network. We argue that our local city centres, and many of our coastal communities, need to have a good train service that can compete with the private car. We set out our initial view as to the possible shape of a North East Local Network in Appendices 1 and 2 to this document.

We have noted that it is highly likely that Metro will, if Washington is to be served and the South Tyne – Sunderland Loop developed, need to share the track on the northern part of the Leamside Line. We would welcome these extensions to the Metro system but feel that it is important that shared use does not rule out the possibility of electrifying the Leamside Line to the same standards as the rest of the national rail network.

- 2.3 We think that the plan should also accommodate the need for local passenger services on the ECML, with a minimum of an hourly service in each direction. For a number of communities, provision of a local service on ECML is the only option if they are to have proper access to the rail network.
- 2.4 In paragraph 2.1 we suggested that better use might be made of the Stillington Line. There seems to be a clear emerging set of plans from both Transport for the North and Network Rail to make use of the line as, in effect, a freight bypass to the section of the ECML between Northallerton and Ferryhill. We say that these plans should go further and we want to see the Stillington Line re-opened for passenger services. This would allow for the introduction of a genuinely fast service from Teesside to Newcastle that also provided improved links to and from Durham City, and would allow an improved stopping pattern at Chester le Street – see our comments above about the need to serve as many local communities as possible. In this context the value of individual proposals for making better use of the Stillington Line, re-opening a station at Ferryhill, and restoring the Leamside line must be considerably greater if they are seen as a single project that is central to the success of the overall plan.
- 2.5 North from Newcastle an, at least hourly, local service between Newcastle and Berwick should be a priority and could be part of a more frequent service for Cramlington. We note that the recent Systra report suggests that paths could be found for such a service if, currently available, EMUs were used. Not only would it allow for much easier access to rail



services for people who live in North Northumberland it would also open up the area for 'green' tourism **and** could be part of a much more frequent service for Cramlington (one of the larger local towns that does not have a pattern of services into Newcastle that allow easy access for work and leisure). Given that such a service will be popular with visitors from both within the region, and from other parts of the wider world, it needs to ensure that they cater for the active travel market and include adequate facilities for carriage of cycles. We also welcome the proposal to re-open the Bensham Curve which could then allow an extension of a North of Newcastle local service to the south, terminating at a new station at Low Fell that could serve both Team Valley and a number of the local housing estates – a service that would also open up new employment opportunities to the residents living near to the ECML in Northumberland. Such a station could also address some of the air quality issues in the area of the Tyne Bridge if it was built as a parkway station to serve areas to the south of Gateshead.

2.6 Given that majority use of ECML will remain with National and Inter-Regional services there is a need to find a mechanism to manage calling patterns at the intermediate stations including Durham, Morpeth, Alnmouth, and Berwick. In a rational world there would be three different types of service on the part of the ECML that covers the area of this plan:

- Non-stop long distance services that exist to serve, in the main, the national market
- Long distance services that provide a regular stopping pattern at the main stations in the NE and the Scottish Borders [Durham, Morpeth, Alnmouth, Berwick, and Dunbar].
- A local stopping service to serve all stations between Newcastle and Berwick – which could be joined to a similar local service from Scotrail between Berwick and Edinburgh. Joining these services would allow communities both north and south of Berwick to have direct access to each other, and to both Edinburgh and Newcastle without the need to change services. Existing levels of commuting from north Northumberland to Edinburgh, and from Scottish Borders to Newcastle, should not be overlooked.

Our view is that the current long distance pattern of 2 London Services, 2 TransPennine and 2 cross Country services is sufficient and we are not in favour of the additional London Service proposed by LNER. We say that space could be found for some form of local service on the ECML to the south of Newcastle by diverting one of the cross country services via the Durham Coast.

2.7 The proposed heavy Rail extension to Airport will clearly add to the pressure on the ECML. Our view is that, given the fact that there is a regular connection between the national rail network and the Metro system at Central Station, this is not a high priority. Given that space on the ECML is at a premium we say that the establishment of an hourly service between Newcastle and Berwick is of much greater importance to the people of the area. Given that the line between Newcastle and the Benton South Curve is already said to be congested an airport service could also make it more difficult to expand services originating from a number of places in Northumberland (situated on either the ECML or the Northumberland Line). We also note that the plan, as published, is not clear as to point where an airport heavy rail service might originate. It seems unlikely to us that the starting point for such a service would be outside of the North East, which seems to be the main catchment area for the airport and note that most areas in the North East could access the



airport by making use of better local rail services to Newcastle and then Metro to the Airport. The proposed heavy rail service would also only improve journey times from the south with those living to the North still having to travel into Newcastle and change. A better solution might be found in development of an interchange station at East Benton allowing for a limited number of services, both north and southbound on the ECML, to connect with the proposed Coast to the Airport Metro Service or to open up a line from a new station, at Killingworth, directly to the airport.

3. The Durham Coast Line

- 3.1 We note that the Coastliners Group are preparing their own submission on the plan.
- 3.2 Our understanding is that the southernmost station on the Durham Coast Line that is within the area covered by this plan is Horden. Our experience of the line tells us that there is a considerable amount of traffic that crosses the 'border' into the Tees Valley area and that many of the infrastructure developments that might be required to make better use of this line might be the responsibility of the Tees Valley Authority. We think that any work on this line needs to be planned jointly with our friends in Tees Valley.
- 3.2 Railfuture North East welcome any improvements in both frequency and speed of services on the Durham Coast Line and would like to see a full examination of the need for additional stations. In particular it would be a welcome development if this resulted in providing, in effect, extra 'express' journeys between Sunderland and Newcastle.
- 3.3 We are aware that the new Metro stock is being built to a standard that will reduce the distance required between trains and so should reduce congestion on the Durham Coast line. We also note that there is the potential for the South Tyneside - Sunderland Loop, a concept we welcome, coupled with any increase in freight resulting from it being diverted from the ECML. Accordingly, we think that the plan may well require some extensive track improvement work to accommodate the number of train movements.
- 3.4 We note that there is little reference in the plan to the possibilities of using inter-regional services to provide both extra local capacity and offer an enhanced range of destinations. In this context we think that consideration needs to be given, as part of a more general examination of the role of longer distance services, to diverting some cross country services away from the ECML via the Durham Coast Line.

4. The Tyne Valley Line

We take the view that this line is important not only as a transport artery for people of the Tyne Valley but also as a freight route and as a potential major centre for 'green' tourism. Our priorities for the Tyne Valley Line are:

- Improvements to the line speed and signalling
- Electrification
- Re-opening Gilsland Station
- Building a timetable that has both better timed connections with the mainlines at both Newcastle and Carlisle **and** improving the stopping pattern to enable journeys between stations either side of Hexham.
- Bus integration.



We would also argue for a turn-back/3rd platform at Gateshead Metro Centre to reduce platform occupation at Newcastle Central and increase the number of services that can terminate at this point.

5. The Northumberland Line

We note that SENRUG are preparing their own submission on the plan that will cover both this line and the section of the ECML between Newcastle and Berwick. Railfuture North East think that it is of particular importance that the service on the line is seen as part of a wider NE Rail Network and that full consideration is given to linkages, either directly or by connection to the remainder of the NE. In this respect we welcome the idea of a Metro link to the Airport from the jointly used station at Northumberland Park but say that further consideration needs to be given to connections to, for example, Cobalt and Silverlink.

6. Proposed line to Consett

Railfuture North East takes the view that Consett would be best served by reinstating the line from Ouston Junction on the ECML to Consett rather than the picturesque former route via the Derwent Valley to the Metro Centre which is well used by walkers/cyclists and horses and has less population nearby. Our proposal could form a logical extension of the Team Valley service proposed via a reinstated Bensham Curve. The route would require reinstated tracks from Tyne Yard along the remaining formation of the 2 former slow lines that followed the ECML to Ouston Junction and then climbed in a South Westerly direction to Consett. New stations would be useful at Birtley, South Pelaw, Beamish, Stanley, Leadgate and Consett. This route from South Pelaw to Consett is now part of the Coast to-Coast cycle route, however there is plenty space to relocate the cycle route close to a reinstated line similar to what was done for cyclists and walkers when the Bathgate to Airdrie line was reinstated in Scotland . At Ouston Junction the proposed line could be reconnected to the ECML providing a facility to take some services, either inter regional or a new local service from Darlington to Newcastle, away from the ECML and allowing for calls at our proposed new Birtley and Team Valley Stations. Consett originating services could also go direct to the Metro Centre by taking the present single line from Low Fell Junction past the Royal Mail Terminal joining the Newcastle to Carlisle line at Norwood Junction.

We also think that, unless any substantial freight traffic might be generated by a line to Consett, consideration should be given to use of some form of light railway on this line.

7 COVID.

We assume that much of the work on the plan was completed either before, or at the early stages of, the current COVID pandemic. We think that the plan needs to be amended to include a section setting out issues relating to the pandemic. There will be real challenges to be faced in persuading people to return public transport but there will also be the possibility of some new opportunities. In particular we think that consideration needs to be given to using any spare capacity that might become available as a result of commercial decisions taken by the Train Operating Companies in strategic way.

8. Local Rail Services.

We have made a number of comments about the need to ensure that local rail services are given greater priority. Having said that we found it difficult to tell from the text of the plan



exactly what pattern of local services is seen as desirable. Given that the plan envisages the re-opening of Leamside and the Northumberland lines, to both passenger and freight services, the next step must be to produce, and consult on, an outline of a local service network that provides, either directly or through properly planned connections, a much greater range of possible rail journeys both within the region and to our immediate neighbours in Tees Valley, Cumbria and Scotland. Such a proposal would allow much greater clarity about the travel possibilities opened up by the whole plan. For example:

- We think that such a network would need to make clear the final destination of trains running north from Teesside and into Tyne and Wear or Northumberland.
- We would like to know what are the proposed destinations that could be served, without the need to change, by trains leaving the Northumberland Line.
- We want to see proposals to make use of the Bedlington to Morpeth Line to provide additional links to the rest of the area from SE Northumberland.

In short: we think the plan needs to include a clear map of what local rail services would look like on completion of the plan. At appendix one we offer an initial attempt at setting out what a local rail service network might look like at the end of the timescale of this plan.

We want the plan to promise an examination of bus 'ownership'/governance in the NE. The current lack of co-ordination of commercial services and clear conflict of interests between the operators, whose main duty is to their shareholders, and public transport users is holding back any real form of integration between public transport modes. The option of public ownership, a whole regional concession, or compulsory partnership arrangements between the 'big four' operators should be considered. Local needs (including local economics) can be identified and addressed with the LA deliberately creating bus services to bolster the area economy and help create a sense of 'wellbeing' amongst the local population with scope for cross subsidisation between services and modes.

Finally, in this section, we think that consideration needs to be given to the possible opportunities provided by the development of the Aln Valley and Weardale Railways. Both will boost tourism in their respective areas, as well as improving access to the wider rail network for individuals who live in these areas. Full advantage of the possibilities that these two lines offer will require a degree of integration with the rest of the rail system and may require, especially in the context of Weardale, consideration as to how to improve the line speed to both the east and west of Bishop Auckland.

A key part of our plan involves the creation of a North East Overground consisting of heavy rail, Metro and light rail. We say that such a service could provide a comprehensive network of rail services that should be fully integrated with a well-planned bus network. We think that this concept would provide greater value than the sum of its parts.

9. Bus, Rail and Metro - Integration

9.1 Our main comments in relation to the sections of the plan that deal with Metro relate to the issue of integration – details of, for example, which stations need to be improved are a matter for very local determination.

Metro needs to be integrated with other forms of public transport at both physical and operational levels. At a physical level we think that there should be a standard for every station, both Metro and Rail, that defines the need for:



- Car, motorcycle and cycle parking – including charging points for electric cars
- Accessibility in relation to active travel – in particular ensuring that stations are seen as being accessible right up the station entrance by pedestrians and cyclists
- Bus integration
- Security arrangements that will encourage passengers to feel safe.

Once such a statement is drafted it needs to be open to proposals for amendments resulting from engaging the whole range of station users and then used as an audit tool to assess the current situation and identify priorities for action.

- 9.2 Integration isn't limited to works on the ground. We welcome the intention in the plan to extend the zonal fare system to the Northumberland Line but think that integration needs to go further. In particular it should be possible to enable passengers from local and national rail services to book tickets to and from stations on the Metro system.
- 9.3 We argue that, at an early stage in the overall plan, the Manors Rail and Metro stations should be physically connected in order to allow easy interchange between services. This integrated station should be further connected with footbridge to the Manors Multi-storey car park and the high level walkways from the car park to the city centre, which require a level access descent at the City end.
- 10 **Governance and Public Involvement.**

We believe that the consultation on this plan has been flawed. We think that it is important that the plan now considers the issue of future consultation over both the potential changes that are inevitable in a plan that covers the next fifteen years **and** the individual sections of the plan. A way needs to be found to involve, at the earliest possible stages, the range of user groups, local councils and other interested parties. We think there should be a KPI that measures both the fact and timing of such involvement.

We are disappointed with the way that the plan has been presented to the public. The channels used to bring the plan to public attention, both print and broadcast media, have been effective but the actual plan once accessed on the internet is difficult to read. For example, in the section setting out the list of schemes for delivery, a section that we suspect is of greatest interest to the public, it is not helpful to see much of the detail in 6 point type. It could be argued that this is a minor issue but we think that the greater issue is that the use of small green type is profoundly difficult for individuals with sight impairment – a group who are considerable users of public transport and who may depend on either magnifiers or computer software to allow them to read this sort of document. It may be that a large print version of the plan, or a text version that can be read by computer software that is available, but we can find no reference to it. In short, we believe that the plan is not presented as a user friendly document and this may well result in a less than informed set of comments. We also think that public involvement, including building links with the many groups in the area that take a particular interest in transport issues, should have taken place at an earlier stage – and preferably before the plan was drafted.

11 **Freight and Green issues**

We note that there is little or no reference to Freight Traffic on the rail network in the NE. The plan includes KPIs for the take-up of ultra-low emission vehicles and improving air quality as well as sections on health and social inequalities and our environment. It also has



an extensive section devoted to road improvements that will impact on their use by both passenger and freight vehicles. Whilst we understand that this plan is primarily about public transport, we think that there should be some examination of the impact of railfreight on the capacity of the railways and the contribution it can make to overall ambitions relating to air quality and the environment. We have noted that Network Rail, in their proposals for decarbonising the railways, suggest an extensive programme of electrification as well as use of emerging technologies to replace the use of diesel power. This issue needs to be acknowledged in the plan as does the need for the provision of suitable infrastructure, passing loops and terminal facilities, to accommodate freight alongside passenger services.

We welcome the proposed re-opening of the Leamside Line, and the positive impact this will have on public transport opportunities. The plans for the use of the line must take into account its potential for freight both within and across the region. The same principle should be applied to all other lines with the overall aim of achieving a modal shift for freight to match the ambitions of the plan to achieve such a shift for people.

Another big issue is the lack of any significant inter-modal (road/rail) freight centres in the North East - in other words no Mossends, no iPorts like Doncaster, no Trafford Parks like at Manchester. If an argument for bulk freight cartage by train is that over long distances it is more economic than using road haulage, then where do these trains off-load when they get to our region? We suggest there needs to be at least one recognised road/rail freight inter-change facility to also include 'break of bulk' provision whereby loads can be broken down into smaller road vehicles for 'last mile' delivery. The present practice of bringing road freight into urban areas in HGVs designed for motorways is crazy and has to be curtailed. Our town and city centres are just not designed to cope with the giant HGV's which all too frequently struggle to negotiate narrow roads or painfully try to manoeuvre in and out of off-loading points sometimes more suitable for a horse and cart era.

Given the ambition of the plan to create a greener environment and the KPI that is suggested we think that it is important that the whole range of issue required to 'green' freight movements are addressed.

We also say that the plan needs to be more explicit in linking the green agenda to plans for improved passenger services. We welcome the recognition that the current fleet of diesel multiple units needs to be replaced but regret that the plan gives little or no consideration as to what should replace them. We say that the plan should also make reference to the Network Rail decarbonising proposals to set suitable standards for DMU replacement. A green approach should not be simply concerned with emissions and we want the plan to set out proposals to integrate active travel and rail travel in more detail and take advantage of the possibilities of car free tourism and 'staycations'. We have referred to the need to set a standard for station design that will allow for proper integration, but there are many more possibilities to extend a green ethos to our local rail services. We have noted with interest the current proposals to greatly increase the capacity of some services in Scotland to carry cycles as one way of encouraging green tourism. We think that the same principle could be applied to many local services in the NE – in particular those services in the Tyne Valley and North Northumberland that could feed traffic onto parts of the national cycle network.



12. Boundaries

The plan includes sections on Connectivity beyond our own boundaries. What seems to be missing is a sense of the additional importance of making the plan fit with similar plans in neighbouring regions – for example we are aware that the Scottish Government is planning additional stations between Edinburgh and Berwick with a view to improving local services between these two points. It would be strange that links with this potential service was not considered in the context of running a local service between Newcastle and Berwick. It seems vital to us that the full benefits of the plan will only be achieved in conjunction with our neighbours in Tees Valley, Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Scotland. What we would describe as local services are not constrained by regional or national boundaries. The idea of a NE Rail Concession to run the whole of a North East Overground, which we support, will require careful consideration of both boundaries and accountability. Our view of what might form the main elements of the Heavy/Light Rail elements of an overground network is shown in the map that comprises Appendix 1. Appendix 2 sets out some more detail in the form of a table.

13. Station Design and Disabled Access

Whilst then plan makes a number of references to the need to make stations fully accessible, we think that the Authority needs to adopt a clear standard for all rail, Metro, and Bus stations. This standard needs to be agreed with the relevant disability groups, published, and open to citizen audit. It is also essential that proper attention is paid to condition of the surrounding streets. A journey starts as a person leaves their home or place of work. A street that is dangerous to walk down, even if the danger is caused by something as simple as an uneven pavement, can lead to a decision to “just get into the car”.

14. Other Rail Based Solutions

Our proposed Network shows Consett – Newcastle being provided by “light rail”. Whilst there are many possible light rail solutions, we think that the Tram-Rail system pioneered in South Yorkshire could provide an affordable way of providing this service. We also take the view that modern tramways do not all have to be “grand projects” in large conurbations and that they have the potential to offer limited facilities for freight transport. For example, making use of the Aln Valley line as a tramway could provide much better and cheaper access to Alnwick Centre and could provide a freight facility to link with the main line at Alnmouth. We would propose an early study to look at the many possibilities for using light rail to link into either the Metro or Rail systems.

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Registered in England and Wales No 05011634

Registered Office: Edinburgh House, 1-5 Bellevue Road, Clevedon, North Somerset, BS21 7NP
(for legal correspondence only)

Railfuture's mission statement:

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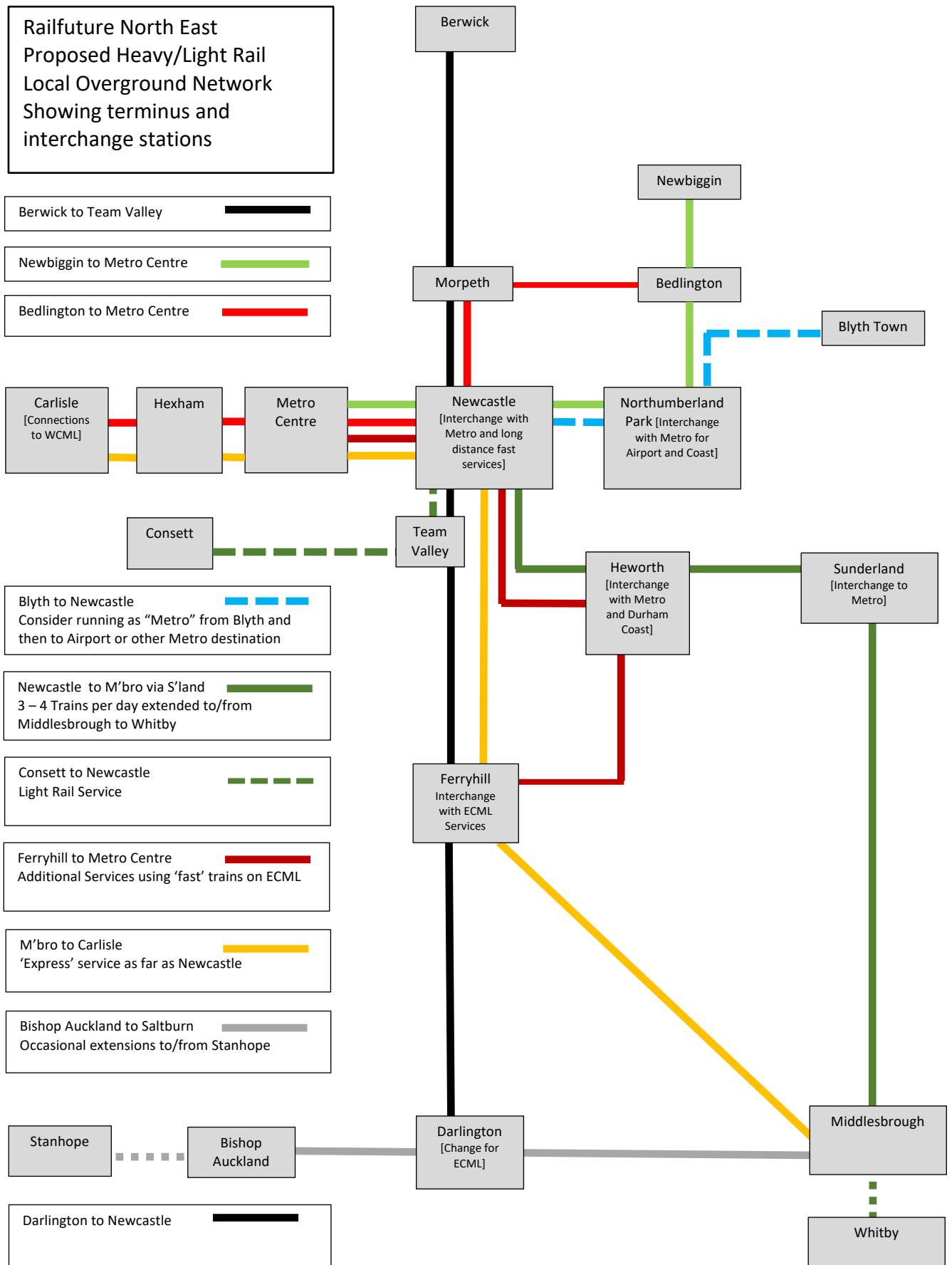


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Appendix 1: 'Tube Style' Map of Heavy/Light Rail Elements of 'NE Overground'.



Appendix 2: An initial RAILFUTURE NORTH EAST outline for NE Local Rail Services. This represents our current thinking about the shape of a North East Local Rail Network. Additional services and destinations would be provided by both the Metro System and 'fast' services operated by the longer distance operators to provide the North East Overground.

Route	Frequency	Route	Extensions	New Stations	Notes
Teesside to Carlisle	Hourly	Via Stillington, ECML and Newcastle	Occasional to and from Whitby.	Ferryhill	For other services from Ferryhill on ECML need to make use of inter-regional services
Teesside to Metro Centre	Half-hourly	Via Durham Coast			If became half hourly then provides 2 'express' services Sunderland to Newcastle. Service frequency, and range of directly served destinations, could be improved if some Cross Country Services diverted via Durham Coast.
Bishop Auckland to Saltburn	Half-hourly	As now	Occasional to Stanhope		Given proposed alterations to Darlington possibility of additional Teesside to Darlington services.
Bedlington to Carlisle	Hourly	Via Morpeth and ECML		Choppington	Needs agreement for passenger services between Bedlington and Morpeth. Provides part of twice hourly service to and from Cramlington and twice hourly Newcastle Carlisle.
Newbiggin to Newcastle	Half hourly	Northumberland Line and ECML		Woodhorn Newbiggin	Would need extension of Northumberland Line from Ashington to Newbiggin. Interchange with Metro at Northumberland Park adds a number of connections including to Airport using proposed Coast to Airport service.

Berwick to Team Valley	Hourly	ECML and Bensham Curve		Team Valley, East Benton, Beal, Belford, Warkworth.	Possible link to Scotrail allows extension to Edinburgh. Provides part of twice hourly service to and from Cramlington and opens up job opportunities at TVTE for people living in SE Northumberland. East Benton Station allows link to Metro for Coast and Airport. Requires Bensham Curve to be electrified
Ferryhill to Metro Centre	Half hourly	Via Leamside	Darlington via ECML	Belmont [Parkway], Washington and (possibly) Leamside, Shincliffe, Usworth, Penshaw, Fencehouses	Needs turn back facility at Metro Centre
Darlington to Newcastle	Hourly	ECML and 'slow lines' via Bensham curve		Birtley	Provides links from Ferryhill to Darlington and regular service to link smaller settlements adjacent to ECML
<p>We also propose a line linking the Northumberland Line into Blyth town centre. This line could either be an extension to the Metro system, with the metro operating on battery power between Northumberland Park and Blyth, or operate as a heavy rail branch. As an extension to the Metro it could offer a service to the airport or to other parts of the system. As a heavy rail branch it could offer a service to the Metro Centre or other destinations in the Tyne Valley.</p>					
<p>Model assumes re-opening of Leamside and Northumberland Line as well as agreement to use Stillington for passenger services. Regular 'fast' services to and from major stations would add to the level of service and be provided by national and inter-regional operators – timetables and stopping patterns need to be negotiated as part of their role in a regional network.</p>					