Manchester Recovery Task Force Public Consultation

Summary

1. This consultation is seeking views from the public and stakeholders on rail timetable work that has been undertaken during 2020 to address the poor performance of the rail network in the Manchester area which has been the source of much train delay on rail services across the whole north of England since late 2017. The consultation will inform decisions to be made in Spring 2021 on potential changes to the passenger timetable that would be implemented from May 2022.
2. This consultation document sets out the objectives of the work and explains how options have been considered and assessed. It asks for views on the principles for the work. It also sets out the type of changes that are being considered.
3. Passengers have been experiencing poor performance to, from and through central Manchester for too long. The key objective of this work has been to find timetable-based solutions for making performance much better. Better performance in the Manchester area will have far reaching beneficial impacts across the north of England rail network.
4. There has been some important investment in the region over the last ten years, including the Ordsall Chord (linking Manchester Victoria to Deansgate), the redevelopment of Victoria station, electrification of lines and the introduction of new rolling stock, allowing the withdrawal of the Pacer trains.
5. In addition, there have been increases in train service frequency and connectivity secured through the franchising process. Although very welcome, this has put greater demands on the whole network, particularly the congested 2-track railway which runs through Manchester Piccadilly and Deansgate via Manchester Oxford Road, known as the Castlefield Corridor. This has consequently pushed the railway beyond the point at which it can operate reliably.
6. Performance issues relating to the infrastructure being unable to cope with the planned frequency of trains are not unique to Manchester, with similar reliability issues being found across the railway network in the north, and elsewhere in the Britain. The first step of resolving some of the structural timetable issues around Manchester will have knock-on positive impacts across the wider north of England.

7. This timetable work is therefore the starting point from which we can build resilience and reliability. The rail industry is also developing a long-term vision for the network, infrastructure and train services in the region, including ways in which additional services can be introduced reliably in the future. The vision is exploring which infrastructure schemes around Manchester will best help unlock capacity, improved connectivity and support economic growth in the longer term.

8. This work and the consultation are concerned with the shorter-term trade-offs between competing demands on the rail network to deliver the best possible overall service. Making trade-offs requires balancing the requirements of some against those of others. Because the outcome of these trade-offs may affect passenger journey opportunities, we want the public, passengers and stakeholders to have the opportunity to comment on the options that are under consideration. In all cases, we are aiming to improve overall train performance so that everyone has a better journey.

9. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is currently dominating everybody's life, it is important to do all we can to ensure that when everyone is able to travel freely again the railway offers them a reliable and dependable service. Over recent years, this has not often enough been the case. The railway must and will continue to play a key role in supporting the economic recovery, helping communities to reconnect and rebuild, and to play its part in supporting the move to a zero-carbon economy.

10. This consultation does four things:

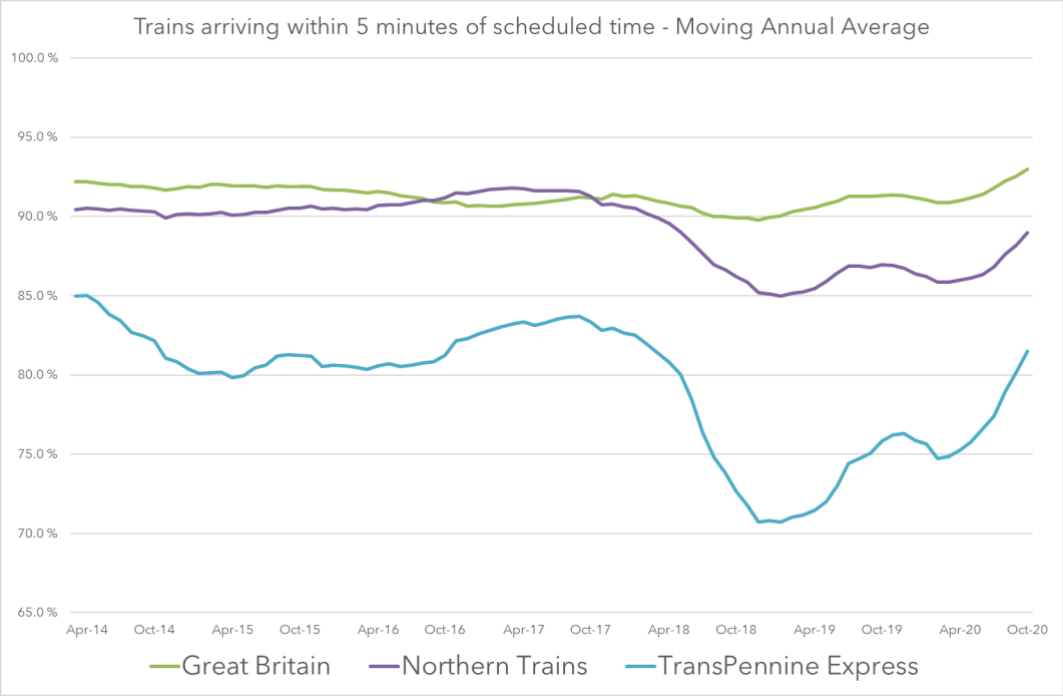
    - Explains the problem we are trying to solve, how we have developed the three main options and how they are being assessed. The consultation document contains technical explanations and information which is intended to help respondents understand how we have done this.
    - Explains the trade-offs and seeks views on them.
    - Explains the detail of the options and their possible impacts on different routes into Manchester and seeks views on them.
    - Sets out next steps.

Manchester Recovery Task Force

11. The Manchester Recovery Task Force was set up in January 2020 to address the unacceptable levels of train performance in the north west of England. Performance fell sharply following the forced[1] late change to the May 2018 timetable. The poor implementation of this change and the chaos it caused was subject of its own inquiry[2] and led the Government to undertake a more fundamental reform of the railway under the leadership of Sir Keith Williams, whose review is now expected to be published in early 2021.

12. The May 2018 timetable was not just poorly executed, it also added more trains to the central Manchester network. This meant that even when the implementation issues were rectified, performance levels recovered only marginally, suggesting continued structural issues with the timetable[3]. The graph below shows the performance for Northern and TransPennine Express (TPE) and Great Britain services overall, over the last seven years. The drop in 2018 is clear, followed by a small recovery, which then stalls until the recent improvement caused by the reduction in services and passengers due to the pandemic. Note that the figures are for Northern as a whole.

Graph showing historic train performance for Northern and TPE services compared to Great Britain overall



[1] The forced late change was due to the delay in the electrification of the Bolton line which then in turn required a short notice change in planned use of diesel trains throughout the Manchester area

[2] https://www.orr.gov.uk/search-news/orr-inquiry-concludes-passengers-let-down-rail-industry-failures

[3] The work of the Task Force has been based on pre-pandemic performance, capacity and demand

13. The Castlefield Corridor infrastructure in central Manchester was declared 'congested' by Network Rail in 2019. The official designation of the area as 'congested' formally acknowledges that the infrastructure is not able to deliver all the train service frequency requirements being demanded of it, resulting in repeated and regular poor performance. In practice, the designation of 'congested infrastructure' means that Network Rail must work with Train Operators and other industry partners to devise a timetable that can deliver a level of performance upon which the travelling public can reasonably depend[4].

14. The Manchester Recovery Task Force is made up of industry and stakeholder representatives from the Department of Transport, Network Rail, Northern, TransPennine Express, Transport for the North and Transport for Greater Manchester. It is the first to include such wide representation to address a congested infrastructure issue. Its aim has been to work collaboratively through difficult problems together with the purpose of delivering the best possible outcomes achievable for passengers and provides a model for how the industry should work going forward.

15. The Task Force has looked at the timetable from first principles to develop a timetable structure will support better performance by design. Work has progressed during the year to develop timetable options for consideration, and to assess carefully how these options would improve the overall reliability of the network as well as the impact they would have on passengers. Work will continue to refine these options and to confirm the operational feasibility and business case of each one in parallel with this consultation.

[4] https://www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Management-of-Congested-Infrastucture-Code-of-Practice.pdf

Impact of COVID-19

16. The impacts of the COVID pandemic have been far-reaching and are likely to be felt for many years. During the pandemic, timetables have been altered several times. These changes have been made to accommodate operational restrictions resulting from the requirements for social distancing and staff availability whilst maintaining a level of service to support essential travel. Services are running at a lower level than before the pandemic, and passenger numbers – although having picked up during the summer - are understandably still low. For example, the current timetable has 12 trains per hour running each way on the Castlefield corridor compared with the pre-COVID December 19 timetable of up to 15 trains per hour each way.

17. It is not particularly unexpected that these circumstances have allowed train performance to improve. Even though things are less busy, this improvement in performance is testament to the dedication and commitment of railway colleagues who have been continuing to provide essential services throughout the pandemic.

18. This has led to some discussion as to whether the changes under consideration are still needed, given that performance is so much better, and it may take some time for passenger demand to recover from the pandemic. The Task Force is strongly of the opinion that they are. There are three important reasons for this:

    - The current infrastructure cannot reliably deliver the (pre-COVID) timetable. This has not changed despite the pandemic and putting the previous timetable back with the number and pattern of trains there had been, is not an option.
    - It is sensible to plan and make changes to the timetable whilst fewer people are travelling by rail.
    - Although it may take some time, it is imperative that we attract and encourage passengers back to the railway when the time is right. We must be ready for them with a robust and reliable timetable, and with sufficient capacity to ensure that rail remains attractive and competitive compared to other modes.

19. Making any changes in the railway takes a lot of planning and time to implement. This is because the consequences of change are far reaching and complex. After plans have been made and agreed, working through the full resource implications takes a long time. Major timetable re-casts take years to develop and implement, especially if recruitment and training of staff is required. Changes of the order we are talking about here will be implemented from May 2022 at the earliest.

Initial first steps

20. A couple of initial 'quick wins' were identified by the taskforce and were implemented at the December 2020 timetable change. This involved Transport for Wales (TfW) services from North Wales and Chester via Warrington Bank Quay which often caused delay when terminating at Manchester Piccadilly. From December the service moved to a common all-day pattern of running through to Manchester Airport. Although this has meant the loss of an additional peak service, station stopping patterns have been adjusted to ensure there is sufficient capacity for passengers for Chester and North Wales in the peak.

21. In addition, the taskforce agreed that when TransPennine Express reinstated its service from Newcastle to Manchester it should terminate at Victoria rather than continue round the Ordsall Chord to the Airport.

22. Separately, following the East Midlands franchise competition in 2018/19, it was decided that the East Midlands Railway (EMR) Liverpool – Norwich service will be split into two separate services – Liverpool to Nottingham and Nottingham to Norwich. Historically, this service has performed poorly, as it crosses several congested routes. Splitting the service should allow both halves of the service to perform better. It will also allow each to develop separately given the different markets and passenger volumes served either side of Nottingham. This split is currently planned for December 2021 or May 2022. The planned transfer of the Nottingham to Liverpool section to TransPennine Express has been put on hold due to the pandemic, so East Midlands Railway will continue to run the service.

23. Finally, changes in rolling stock intended to improve performance, are expected over the next couple of years. Both Transport for Wales and East Midlands Railway are planning to replace trains with doors at the end of carriages with those that have doors along the carriage. This will help speed up passenger boarding and alighting, which can sometimes contribute to delay on very busy services.

24. The other key work progressing is the future service pattern on the East Coast Mainline. Decisions emerging from this work may impact on the service patterns from the North East and Yorkshire to Manchester and Liverpool. The Manchester Recovery Task Force work is based on the existing service patterns. These could change in the future, and the two projects are working closely to ensure their conclusions are compatible.

Manchester's railway geography

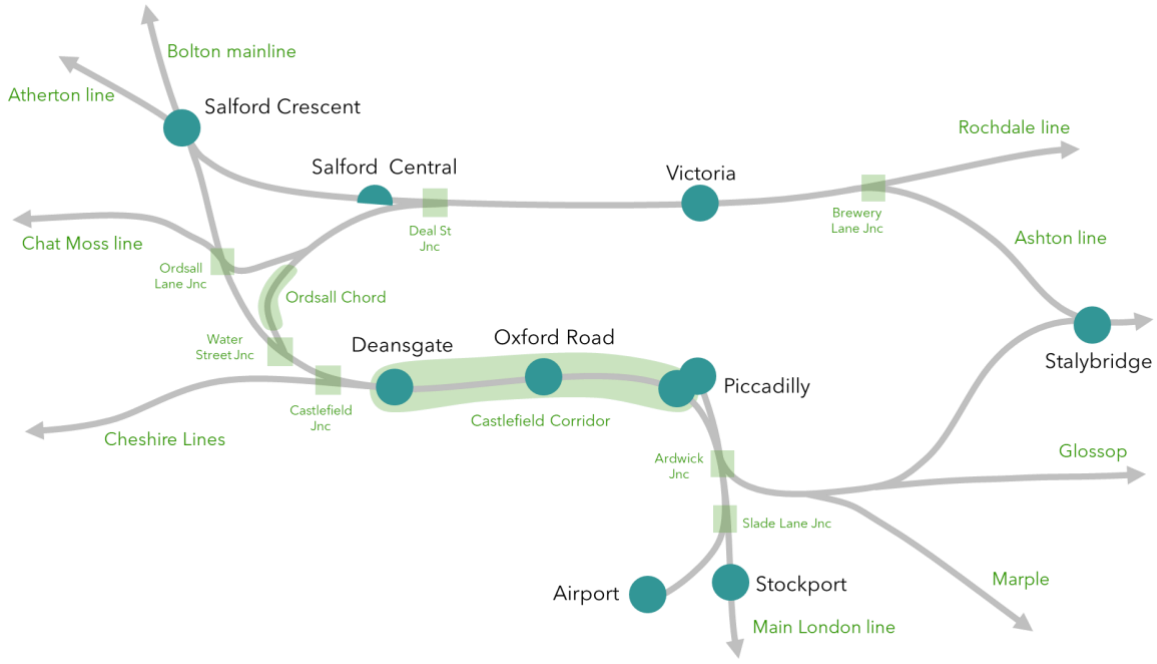
25. The railway geography in the Manchester area is complicated. Following its dominance as a mode of transport from the end of the 19th to the post-war period, rail travel declined as the era of the car and motorway took over. The configuration of the network is partly the result of history, partly the result of rationalisation following railway decline, and partly the result of investment over recent decades. This recent investment has facilitated passenger growth, but the investment has not been systematic, meaning that investment in one place has sometimes exposed bottlenecks and weaknesses elsewhere.

26. There are several characteristics of the current configuration that pose particular challenges when planning services. They are:

- The two main stations (Piccadilly and Victoria) are a mile apart and do not offer a particular easy walking interchange.
- The only north-south heavy rail link via the recently opened Ordsall Chord crosses several junctions – although it did help relieve crossing movements south of Piccadilly as intended.
- Most approaches into Manchester are two track railways.
- Unlike many railways around London these two track railways are mixed use – i.e. long distance, inter-regional and local passenger as well as some freight services.
- Passenger services use many different types of rolling stock with doors in different places, extending the station dwell times needed for passenger boarding and alighting.
- Long distance and airport trains often convey passengers unfamiliar with travelling by rail. Significant numbers of passengers with luggage can also be difficult to manage in a mixed environment that is busy with regular travellers and commuters.

The diagram below gives a simplified picture of the railway lines in Central Manchester. Not all lines are shown, but the diagram does give an indication of the junction complexity.

Simplified diagram of railway stations, lines and junctions in central Manchester



Over recent years, the growth of rail use and the increase in services has meant that train operators have increased the range and frequency of services on offer, particularly with the new TransPennine Express and Northern franchises which commenced in April 2016. Although this has been with the best intentions of offering passengers choice and convenience – intentions that have been fully supported by funders and stakeholders alike – the extent to which the infrastructure has been able to manage the demands placed on it has been pushed beyond breaking point.

27. To maximise the capacity of any transport system, the best way is to have no junctions, and everyone travelling at the same speed. Think of the 50mph limit on motorways when there is congestion. The equivalent on a rail network is to have dedicated services doing the same thing with the same stops with as few junctions and crossovers as possible. Most underground networks are planned and built in this way. Uniformity across the board is the most reliable way to get maximum capacity for a particular network.

28. Very few rail networks have the fortune of being exactly suitable for the requirements the travelling public in the 21st century. There always needs to be a degree of compromise between the requirements of commuters versus long-distance travellers; those who want fast services versus other who want more stops at their station; those who want their service to go via one route, versus those via another; those who want a seat versus those who would prefer more standing space so there is room to get on the train further down the line. Making these compromises or trade-offs is a key

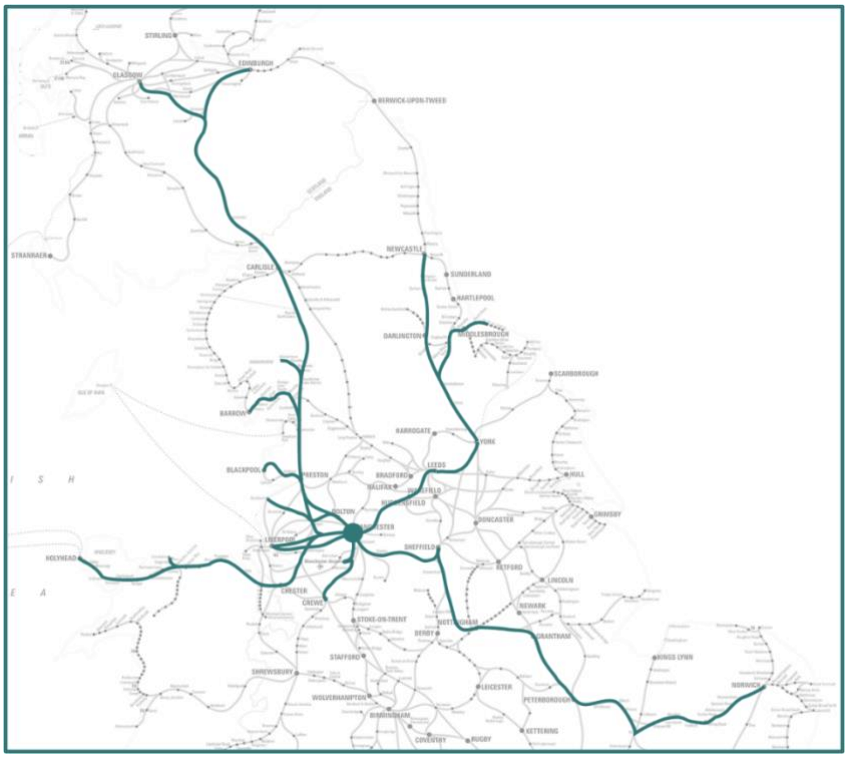
element of how railway services are assessed, and we come back to this later.

29. When the demands placed on the network become too high, the performance of everyone's journey is affected, because the knock-on effects of normal minor day-to-day disruption – which Network Rail and train operators aim to minimise but can never be fully removed – escalate into delays way beyond the initial incident. This is due to the high level of interaction that trains have with each other, particularly at junctions where trains cross paths.

30. When passengers cannot depend on a reasonably reliable service, they will avoid travelling by train where they can. Many will not have a choice in the short term, but over the longer term they will make different travel, job or home choices on a range of many factors including the reliability of the train service. So, there are sound financial reasons for having a reliable network. There are also wider economic reasons too. Delay caused by late trains wastes peoples' time, and time is valuable. We assess this too when we look at the value of rail services, and this helps quantify the impacts of poor train performance.

31. The following map shows the origin of services travelling through the Castlefield corridor. Services using the Castlefield Corridor have diverse origins, including Scotland, Lancashire, Yorkshire, the North East, the East of England and Wales. The map gives an indication of the distance travelled by many of these services, each scheduled to arrive at critical points of their journey timed to seconds.

Map showing span of rail services travelling through the Castlefield corridor (December 2019 timetable)



Objectives for the options

32. Over the last few months, the Task Force has been considering options available to improve the situation without significantly compromising journey opportunities. There are many things that have been taken into consideration when devising options. These include:

    - the impact that changes will have on existing and potentially new passengers;
    - the impact that changes will have on overall train reliability;
    - the changes required from an operational perspective – for example, the location and use of rolling stock and train staff;
    - whether changes in services require significant train crew training[5];
    - the costs and benefits of all the above. Costs and benefits include both operational cost and revenue changes as well as non-financial impacts such as journey time savings or gain, and changes to passenger delay time. Further description is provided in 'Assessment method' section.

33. The Task Force has sifted and refined many options and now has three main options which are the focus of this document. Each option comprises a package of changes that simplify the pattern of train services and train planning experts believe they are deliverable. The options for consideration have the same objectives – namely:

    - to improve train performance for everybody;
    - to maintain service levels and capacity for as many passengers as possible;
    - to create a timetable that is based on sound principles from which it will be possible to build improvements, as infrastructure investment becomes available.

34. One way in which timetable planners design a timetable to perform reliably is to avoid services terminating on through platforms where possible – particularly where platform capacity is limited. This is because terminating trains require a further train movement (either in passenger service or not) to clear the platform.

35. The second main way to design a reliable timetable is to segregate train movements as much as possible, so that the number of conflicting movements across infrastructure is minimised. As we have seen, the railway geography in Manchester has many junctions, and a reliable timetable is more likely to come from a timetable that uses as few conflicting crossing movements as possible.

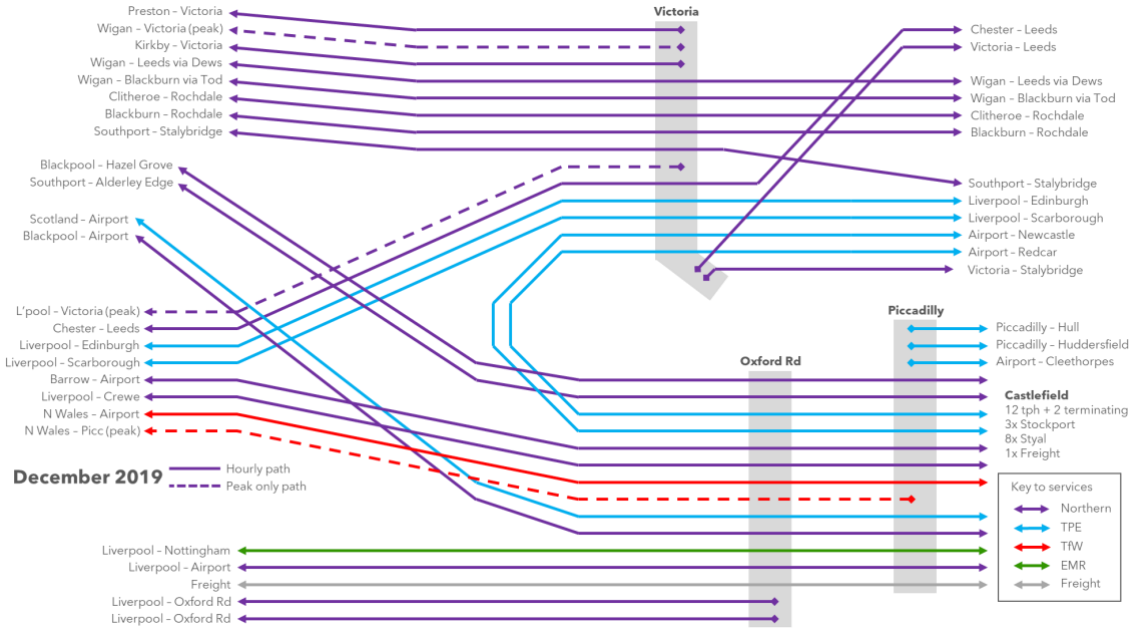
36. Finally, the timetable planners have aimed to create regular intervals between services as far as possible. This makes the timetable easier to

[5] Train crew require 'route learning' for every section of track they operate on. If services alter routes and train crew require new, or updated learning, training slots must be scheduled into the crew rosters so that individuals can gain the relevant knowledge. This requires considerable advance planning so that services can be covered while staff are training and not available for regular duty

understand for passengers, and helps ensure that passenger demand is distributed evenly, rather than 'bunching' when two trains are scheduled close together. This 'standardisation' is a positive feature for both passengers and train operators who are aiming to run a reliable service.

37. The diagram below shows the pattern of services travelling through Manchester. Note that the diagram represents services, not track. The Castlefield corridor (Oxford Road to Piccadilly) is a 2-track railway only.

Diagram showing the current (pre-COVID) service pattern in Manchester[6]
(note that south Manchester services are not shown)



38. The options for consideration have been developed in this context, with these objectives. All options have got several essential features in common, which are:

- A reduction in frequency on the Castlefield Corridor - the key 'Congested Infrastructure' constraint – to a maximum of 12 trains per hour each way off-peak, which is assessed to be the reliable train service limit of the corridor.
- Better spacing of trains on the Castlefield Corridor to avoid delays knocking-on to following trains.
- Fewer conflicts at key junctions to avoid trains crossing each other's paths.
- Better linkage of services at Victoria to reduce trains turning round in platforms.

[6] Other operators run services to Manchester, including Cross Country Trains and Avanti West Coast. These are not planned to change and have therefore been omitted for clarity

- A move towards repeating 30 minute and 60 minute service patterns, to standardise operations and make train service patterns simpler for passengers, particularly when they need to interchange to complete their journey.

39. The train services which are best candidates for change to achieve the objectives above are generally those that are travelling from the north to Manchester Airport (because Manchester Airport is south of Manchester, and to reach it from the north requires travelling through the Castlefield corridor) and services from Manchester Piccadilly to the North West. These services must navigate Castlefield, Water St, Ordsall Lane and Windsor Bridge (Salford Crescent) junctions on their journeys and present multiple opportunities to either pick up or generate delay throughout the network. However, Manchester Airport also provides valuable Manchester terminal capacity which is limited.

40. Direct services to Manchester Airport are valued very highly by stakeholders across the whole region, as is the option for services to more than one of the Central Manchester stations. The Task Force is very mindful of this value, and understands that passengers make significant choices about home, work and leisure depending on the promised timetable. Although it is always easier for passengers to have a direct service where possible, we believe that the current provision of direct services, and choice of Manchester destinations, is related to the poor performance of the network overall. Needing to interchange is never ideal, but if it is accompanied by anxiety about missing a connection, the overall journey is further compromised.

41. Our intention is to deliver a reliable, dependable service so that making an interchange to complete a journey isn't a deal breaker for travelling at all.

Question 1: Do you support the aim of standardising and simplifying service patterns if this will significantly improve overall train performance?

Description of options

42. The three options for a May 2022 timetable recast that we present here are named Option A, Option B and Option C. Details of each option are provided as an appendix at the end of this document. The options offer increasing levels of intervention compared with the December 2019 timetable pattern of services (the "No Change" option) with Option A involving the least change, and Option C the most. These options are being developed to operate on the current infrastructure.

43. Work is also progressing on developing infrastructure interventions for the longer term. Given the long lead time for railway enhancement projects, none will be available to address the current performance issues by 2022. That is why this work is focussed on improving the timetable structure to deliver better performance.

44. Each of the options is designed to provide either the same level or an increase in peak capacity when compared with the 'No Change' option. Where reductions in peak frequency occur on a particular route, trains will be lengthened to maintain overall peak capacity. The detail of peak train lengths will be confirmed during the next phase of work.

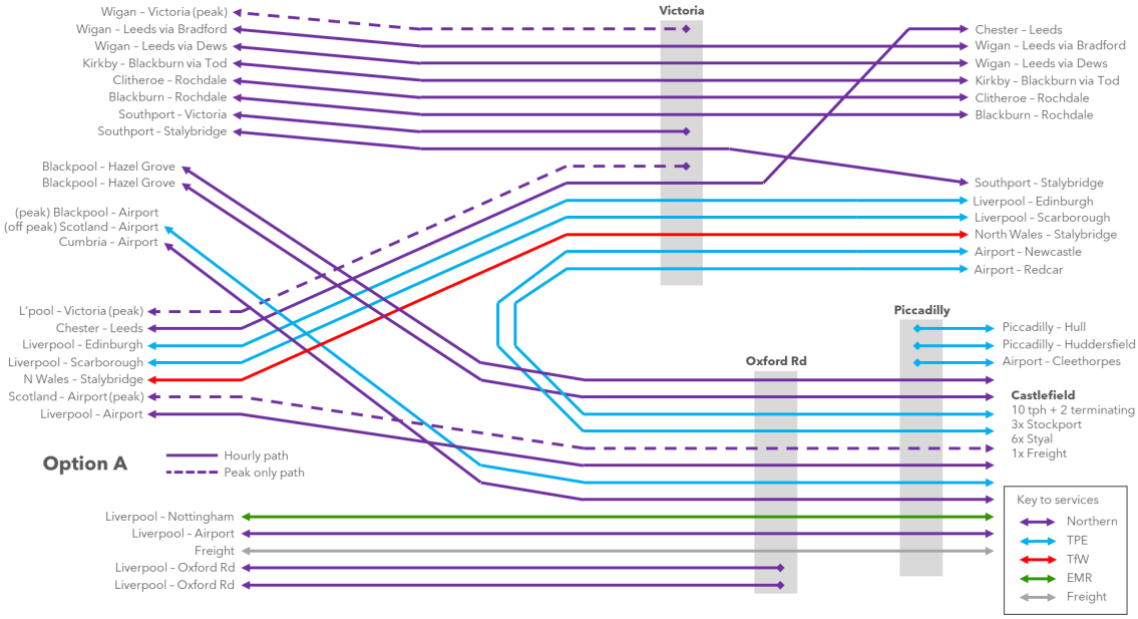
45. Under each option there could be changes to the central Manchester destination station – with trains on some routes running to Victoria rather than Piccadilly. These changes form part of the overall network design to improve performance and reduce the level of delay in Manchester.

Option A

46. Option A has the fewest change from December 2019 of the three options.

- Most existing origins and destinations are retained, particularly for Newcastle to Piccadilly and Sheffield to Airport journeys.
- Some standardisation is possible in this option, for example Blackpool trains to Hazel Grove, with 4 trains per hour being provided all day from Bolton to the south of Manchester. Cumbria to Manchester Airport trains (currently routed via Wigan) instead run via Bolton.
- The current pattern of TPE Scottish, North route and South route services remain.
- Services through Victoria have been linked to reduce the number of terminating trains at this busy station, with more trains running through (e.g. Wigan – Leeds via Bradford).
- The Transport for Wales service from North Wales and Chester train is re-routed from Manchester Piccadilly and the airport to operate to Stalybridge via Victoria.
- South Manchester stays largely consistent with the December 2019 plan, but Buxton services are reduced to an hourly service outside the peak periods. The Southport service to Alderley Edge is split into a Southport to Victoria service and Piccadilly to Alderley Edge service.

Proposed service pattern in Manchester for Option A (note that south Manchester services are not shown)



The diagram shows the reduction in services using the Castlefield corridor (from 14 to 12 in off-peak periods). This has been achieved by routing the Transport for Wales North Wales service to Stalybridge and all Southport services to Victoria.

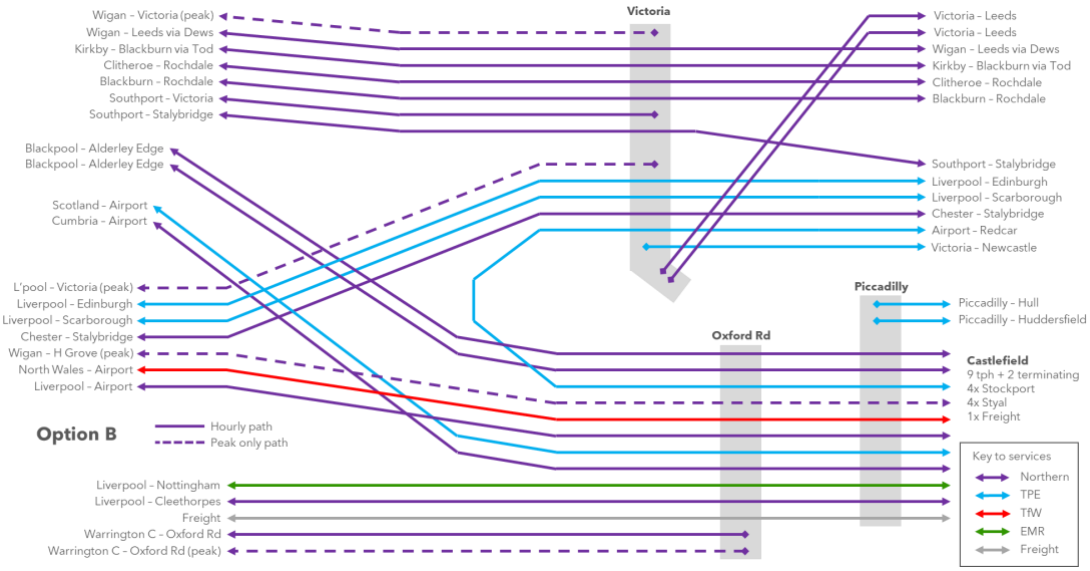
Option B

47. Option B is a variant that maintains Airport connectivity for Liverpool and North Wales. The Cleethorpes/Nottingham service via Sheffield to Liverpool is increased to a standard 2 trains per hour. This means there is no longer a through service from Sheffield to Manchester Airport; a movement which is very operationally challenging at Manchester Piccadilly. Passengers from Warrington Central would also need to change at Piccadilly to access the Airport.

- Stopping trains on the line from Warrington Central are split at Warrington rather than running through from Liverpool, and run at only one per hour off-peak, calling at all stations. This offers an improved pattern for most stations rather than the present pattern of alternate hours at some smaller stations. The two Liverpool-Sheffield services would call at the larger intermediate stations such as Birchwood, Irlam and Urmston.
- There is some standardisation of paths at Manchester Victoria, with 2 trains per hour from Victoria to Leeds via Bradford. Southport trains run to Stalybridge/Victoria all day.
- There is some standardisation of services south of Manchester. One TPE Ordsall Chord train (i.e. that travels to Manchester Airport) is terminated at Victoria, all day.

- In the peak periods, Wigan has a fast hourly service to the south side of Manchester.
- On the Bolton line, the Scotland to Manchester Airport service calls every hour at Bolton and Chorley.
- To the south of Manchester, Buxton would retain two services per hour, but the Crewe line local station services would both be diverted to run via Styal/Manchester Airport.

Proposed service pattern in Manchester for Option B (note that south Manchester services are not shown)



Option C

48. Option C makes the most interventions and moves closest to 30-minute frequencies on most of the corridors into Manchester, including services on the Blackburn, Calder Valley, Chorley, Wigan, Buxton, Chester via Warrington Bank Quay, Airport (stopping) and Crewe lines.

49. As for Option B, the Cleethorpes/Nottingham service via Sheffield to Liverpool becomes 2 services per hour, meaning there is no direct service from Sheffield to Manchester Airport – a move that is very operationally challenging at Manchester Piccadilly.

- Stopping trains on the line from Warrington Central are split at Warrington rather than running through from Liverpool, and run at only one per hour off-peak, calling at all stations. This offers an improved pattern for most stations rather than the present pattern of alternate hours at some smaller stations. The two Liverpool-Sheffield services would call at the larger intermediate stations such as Birchwood, Irlam and Urmston.
- In this option, there would be no direct service from either Sheffield or Liverpool to Manchester Airport.

- In peak periods, one train per hour would run via the Ordsall Chord to Manchester Airport. The train from Newcastle would terminate at Manchester Victoria. Off-peak, the train will run to Manchester Airport.
- The TfW North Wales and Chester service also loses its direct airport link, with the service instead diverted to run to Manchester Piccadilly via Knutsford. This offers a new semi-fast service on the Mid-Cheshire line in addition to the existing hourly service.
- There would be regular calls in the Scotland and Cumbria trains at Bolton and Chorley, with these services running at 30 minute intervals.
- Chester would have two trains per hour to Manchester Victoria at 30 minute intervals, continuing on to Leeds.
- In the peak periods Wigan maintains a fast hourly service to the south of Manchester.
- To the south of Manchester, Buxton retains two trains per hour.
- The Crewe line local station services run at 30 minute intervals and call at all stations, and run via Manchester Airport.

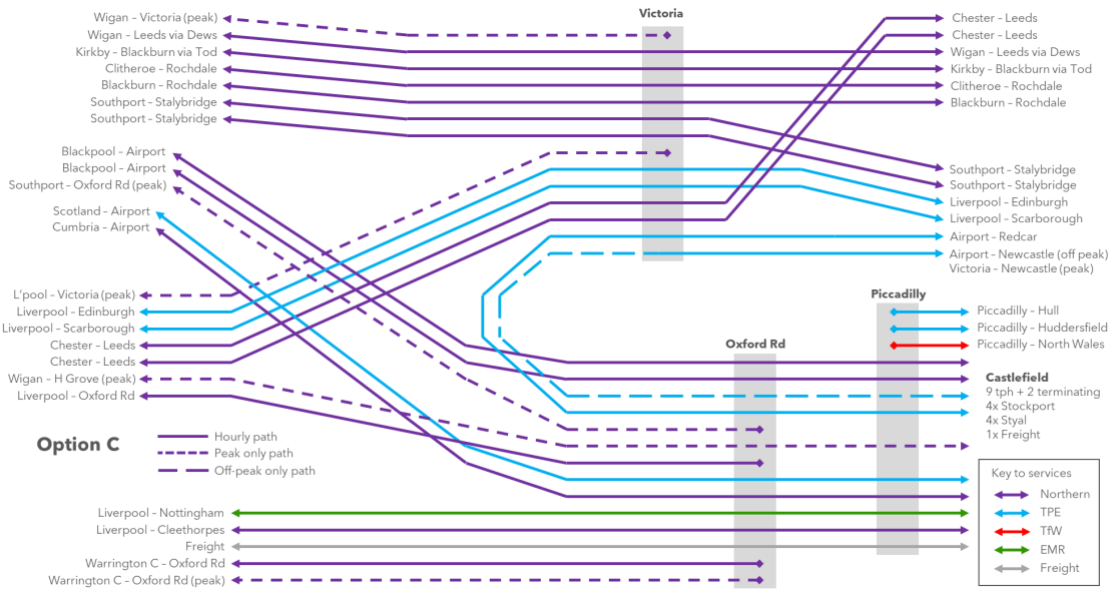
50. This options also offers:

- Standard 15-minute frequency (broadly) for the key flows of Bolton to Manchester Piccadilly, and Wigan Wallgate to Manchester Victoria.
- Standardised paths at Manchester Victoria, with 2 trains per hour from Southport to Stalybridge and 2 trains per hour from Chester to Leeds, running via Warrington Bank Quay.
- A peak train from Southport to Oxford Road running semi-fast via Atherton.
- An even 15 min frequency at Levenshulme and Heaton Chapel.
- Regular half hourly stops at all of the Bolton line stations between Leyland and Kearsley.
- Extended turnrounds at terminal stations and trains operating on single routes (with reduced 'interworking'), significantly helping performance by reducing the level of delay transmitted from one route to another.
- The elimination of trains using the same platform at Manchester Airport, also helping improve performance.

51. In Timetable Option C, a number of stations gain an improvement in frequency, helping contribute to overall benefits. For example:

- Kearsley, Farnworth, Moses Gate, Mossley, Greenfield, Marsden, Slaithwaite, Walsden, Runcorn East, Frodsham and Helsby receive a half hourly instead of hourly service.
- Trafford Park, Humphrey Park, Chassen Road, Flixton and Glazebrook receive an hourly rather than 2 hourly service (off peak).
- Northwich, Knutsford and Altrincham receive a half hourly rather than hourly service.

Proposed service pattern in Manchester for Option C (note that south Manchester services are not shown)



Assessment method

52. Each of the options has been assessed using two established quantitative methods:

- A rail simulation model that calculates the expected minutes of train delay accumulated by all trains for any given timetable. This measures the impact of the options on performance; and
- A rail passenger demand model, which calculates the effects on passenger numbers of changes in proposed timetables. This measures the impact of the options on the numbers of people travelling – both from the timetable changes themselves and from having a more reliable railway

53. Train performance simulation is a powerful way to test how a timetable could work in practice. The simulation models variations in typical delay which services bring into the complex Manchester network. The model then simulates how this delay would impact upon other services within the area of study. The ability to model variations in delay is important because even though a timetable may be 'theoretically' possible to operate – i.e. operate with no delay if every train runs perfectly to time – when delay does occur, it may magnify the impacts across many more services and leading to more passengers being affected. The simulations allow these effects to be measured systematically for each option.

54. The rail passenger demand model works by calculating all the journey opportunities across the network throughout the day and calculates the overall time of a journey (including actual travel time, a service frequency allowance, time needed to change between trains – including an 'interchange penalty' which reflect the inconvenience of having to change trains on a journey). This overall time measurement is used to give a fairer overall assessment of how rail passengers experience their journey and is underpinned by well-established, industry-standard research. The calculations are weighted by the number of passengers (pre-COVID) travelling across the day.

55. The results provide quantitative comparisons of the options, with the ability to weigh up the impacts on passengers of changes in journey options against those of changes in train performance. The passenger demand modelling takes account of all journeys across the day, so it calculates the benefits of, for example, an increase in frequency of services for some, versus a loss of a direct service for others. It measures, for example, the additional time impact of a station stop for those already on the train, versus the benefit of an additional station stop at a particular location.

Question 2: Do you support the approach of measuring the service level and performance impacts across all passengers to allow fair trade-offs between options?

Initial Assessment results

56. The initial results of the assessment of the options show the further we move towards a 30-minute or 60-minute even frequency for all corridors into Manchester, the better the timetable passenger benefits and passengers' performance benefits. This comes at the expense of the loss of some direct services to Manchester Airport, and choice of Manchester destination station for some journeys. Pre-COVID, of all passengers travelling to Manchester, 93% are travelling to city centre destination stations, compared to 7% to the airport. Airport journeys tend to be longer distance trips by passengers travelling infrequently.

57. Initial results confirm that the No Change (December 2019) option does not perform well in terms of train performance/reliability, supporting the need for change. Over the coming weeks, work will continue to refine the options and particularly to optimise the arrangements for the additional peak services traditionally required across all options. The Task Force will continue with the assessment timetabling and performance modelling work to ensure we have the best evidence as well as the responses to this consultation before making a recommendation for a decision in Spring 2021.

Table showing initial results of performance impacts

Performance results	No Change option	Option A	Option B	Option C
Average delay per train (minutes)	3.0	2.5	2.3	2.1

58. The table shows the extent to which the options reduce the amount of average delay a train collects on its journey. We have seen that services often start from well beyond the Manchester area, so it would be difficult to eliminate all delay from the system by revising the Manchester services alone. The results indicate that changing the timetable in the ways proposed can make a significant difference in train performance across the network. The best result significantly reduces average delay per train from 3 to 2.1 minutes. This will have a positive impact on all rail travellers.

59. Results also indicate that for each of the options, performance improves on the Castlefield Corridor. This confirms that the approach of reducing train frequency and improved spacing of trains is helping to improve reliability.

Table showing initial results of passenger impacts

Passenger results	No Change option	Option A	Option B	Option C
Change in daily demand due to connectivity changes compared to 'No Change' option	n/a	-1,100	+400	+2,200
Change in daily demand due to improved performance compared to 'No Change' option	n/a	+2,200	+3,500	+4,800
Net impact of changes on daily demand compared to 'No Change' option (total of rows 1 and 2)	n/a	+1,100	+3,900	+7,000

60. In this table the first row shows the way the changes in demand respond to the timetable changes. A positive number corresponds to more people travelling each day because of the changes. A positive number means more people have been attracted to use the services because of improvements, and this has outweighed those who may be lost because their journey would be affected adversely.

61. The second row shows the demand change resulting from high level performance changes – more people travel when the service is more reliable, with fewer people travelling if performance worsens. All three options improve on the 'No Change' case, with increasing improvements in network performance resulting in attracting more passengers.

62. Whilst the timetable changes are expected to have a positive impact on overall demand, some passengers will need to change trains who previously had direct services – including to Manchester Airport. There had been around 18,300 trips to the airport by train each day, including 6,800 Manchester Piccadilly to Manchester Airport trips. In the No Change scenario, a total of 15,900 daily passengers have a direct service to the airport. In Option A, around 15,100 trips have a direct service, in Option B it is around 13,900 trips and Option C around 12,700. Passengers needing to change trains will typically do so at Manchester Piccadilly.

Question 3: On the basis of these results, which is your preferred option?

Next steps

63. This consultation will continue for 8 weeks. During this period, the Task Force will continue to work with stakeholders, train operators and others to further develop and refine the options. We will consider the consultation responses as they are received. This information will inform a final recommendation, on which a decision on the preferred option will be made.

64. Following this decision, Train Operators will develop a detailed complete timetable which they will then consult on with the public and other user groups, as is normal practice for proposed timetable change. This second consultation planned for May 2021 provides an opportunity for communities to engage with operators who will endeavour to accommodate adjustments to the proposed timetable where possible. By this point the main structure of the timetable will be broadly fixed.

Question 4: Please provide your views on the details of the proposed changes which are detailed by route in the Appendix.

Additional questions

Question 5: Where do you usually travel from and to? Please include your origin and destination station

Question 6: How often do you make this journey?

Question 7: What is the reason for your journey? For example, work, business, education, leisure

65. You can respond to questions 5-7 for different journeys if you make different trips.

Appendix

Details of options

Split by line of route, the details of each timetable option are set out below. Calling patterns typically remain the same as in the No Change timetable unless otherwise noted.

Liverpool to Manchester via Warrington Central

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 fast train per hour between Liverpool and Manchester Airport, via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour from Liverpool to Nottingham (and Norwich) via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 2 trains per hour between Liverpool and Manchester Oxford Road, skip-stopping with some stations only having one train every 2 hours.
Option A	As per current.
Option B	• 1 semi fast train per hour between Liverpool and Cleethorpes, via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly, calling at larger intermediate stations such as Birchwood, Irlam and Urmston. • 1 fast train per hour between Liverpool and Nottingham, via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • In peak periods, 2 stopping trains per hour between Warrington and Manchester Oxford Road, calling all stations. • Off-peak, 1 stopping train per hour between Warrington and Manchester Oxford Road calling at all stations. • 2 trains per hour between Liverpool and Warrington Central calling at all stations.
Option C	As per Option B.

In **Timetable Option A**, no changes are made to the structure of these services.

In **Timetable Options B and C**, the following changes are made:

- The Liverpool to Airport service instead runs to Cleethorpes, calling at Liverpool South Parkway, Warrington Central, Birchwood, Irlam and Urmston.
- 2 stopping trains per hour run all day from Warrington Central to Liverpool Lime Street.
- In peak periods, 2 stopping trains per hour run from Warrington Central to Manchester Oxford Road, calling at all stations.
- In off-peak periods, 1 stopping train per hour runs from Warrington Central to Manchester Oxford Road, calling at all stations.

The changes to stopping services are designed to provide a standard hourly pattern, increase the number of calls at most stations, and reduce the number of train movements in the Castlefield Corridor.

The Liverpool to Airport service instead runs to Cleethorpes; those travelling beyond Manchester to Sheffield get an extra direct service. Passengers for the Airport change at Piccadilly, with same-platform interchange possible and a frequent service. The Cleethorpes and Nottingham trains would be exactly 30 minutes apart, providing an even interval service. These changes are designed to simplify and reduce the number of train movements on the approach to Manchester Piccadilly.

Liverpool and Wigan to Manchester via Eccles

December 2019 service pattern	• 2 fast trains per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria, on to Leeds via Huddersfield. • 1 train per hour from Chester to Leeds, via Manchester Victoria and Halifax. • 1 train per hour from North Wales to Manchester Airport, via Warrington Bank Quay, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Crewe, via Newton-le-Willows, Manchester Oxford Road, Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport. • 1 fast train per hour from Cumbria to Manchester Airport, via Wigan North Western, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly • In the peak periods, 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria.
Option A	• 2 fast trains per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria, on to Leeds via Huddersfield. • 1 train per hour from Chester to Leeds, via Manchester Victoria and Halifax. • 1 train per hour from North Wales and Chester to Stalybridge, via Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester Victoria. • 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Airport via Newton-le-Willows, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • In the peak periods, 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria. • In the peak periods, 1 fast train per hour from Scotland to Manchester Airport (not calling at Wigan).
Option B	• 2 fast trains per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria, on to Leeds via Huddersfield. • 1 train per hour from Chester to Stalybridge, via Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from North Wales to Manchester Airport, via Warrington Bank Quay, Manchester Oxford Roadand Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Airport via Newton-le-Willows, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria (peak periods only). • 1 fast train per hour from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove (peak periods only) via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.
Option C	• 2 fast trains per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria, on to Leeds via Huddersfield. • 2 train per hour from Chester to Leeds, via Manchester Victoria and Halifax. • 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Oxford Road via Newton-le-Willows. • 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool to Manchester Victoria (peak periods only). • 1 fast train per hour from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove (peak periods only) via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.

In **Timetable Option A**, the following changes are made:

- 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool runs only to the Airport and not on to Crewe.
- 1 train per hour from North Wales and Chester is diverted to Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge, not Manchester Airport.
- The Cumbria to Manchester Airport train runs via Bolton rather than via Wigan.

The change reduces the number of trains on the Castlefield Corridor and simplifies the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria. It also removes the fast service from Wigan to Manchester routed via Eccles, as well as breaking direct links from Wigan to Manchester Airport.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes are made:

- 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool would run only to the Airport, not on to Crewe.
- The Cumbria to Manchester Airport train would run via Bolton rather than via Wigan.
- A peak only service runs from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove.

The change reduces the number of trains on the Castlefield Corridor and simplifies the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria. The peak only service from Wigan re-establishes the fast Wigan to Piccadilly link, but does not provide a direct Airport link.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- 1 stopping train per hour from Liverpool runs to Manchester Oxford Road, not on to Manchester Airport and Crewe.
- The Cumbria to Manchester Airport train runs via Bolton rather than via Wigan.
- There are 2 trains per hour from Chester to Leeds via Manchester Victoria and Halifax, with the North Wales and Chester train being diverted to run to Manchester Piccadilly via Northwich to provide a second service on the mid Cheshire line.
- In peak periods, 1 train per hour runs from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove, via Manchester Piccadilly.
- A peak only service runs from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove.

These changes reduce the number of trains on the Castlefield Corridor and simplify the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

Wigan to Manchester via Atherton and Westhoughton

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 train per hour from Southport to Stalybridge via Westhoughton and Manchester Victoria. . • 1 train per hour from Southport to Alderley Edge via Westhoughton, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 train per hour from Wigan to Leeds via Atherton, Manchester Victoria and Dewsbury. • 1 train per hour from Wigan to Blackburn via Atherton and Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Manchester Victoria via Atherton. • In the peak periods, 1 train per hour from Wigan to Manchester Victoria via Atherton.
Option A	• 1 train per hour from Southport to Stalybridge via Westhoughton and Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from Southport to Manchester Victoria via Westhoughton. • 1 train per hour from Wigan to Leeds via Atherton, Manchester Victoria and Dewsbury. • 1 train per hour from Wigan to Leeds via Atherton, Manchester Victoria and Bradford. • 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Blackburn via Manchester Victoria via Atherton.
Option B	• 1 train per hour from Southport to Stalybridge via Westhoughton and Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from Southport to Manchester Victoria via Westhoughton. • 1 train per hour from Wigan to Leeds via Atherton, Manchester Victoria and Dewsbury. • 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Blackburn via Atherton and Manchester Victoria. • In the peak periods, 1 train per hour from Wigan to Manchester Victoria.
Option C	• 2 trains per hour from Southport to Stalybridge via Westhoughton and Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from Wigan to Leeds via Atherton, Manchester Victoria and Dewsbury. • 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Blackburn via Atherton and Manchester Victoria. • In the peak periods, 1 train per hour from Wigan to Manchester Oxford Road, via Atherton, running semi-fast.

In **Timetable Option A**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Southport is diverted away from Manchester Piccadilly/Alderley Edge, instead running to Manchester Victoria.
- 1 train per hour from Wigan to Manchester Victoria is linked to Leeds via Bradford.
- 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Manchester Victoria runs on to Blackburn.
- The peak only trains from Wigan to Manchester Victoria do not run, with additional carriages being added to other services to maintain peak capacity.

The changes simplify and standardise the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Southport is diverted away from Manchester Piccadilly/Alderley Edge to Manchester Victoria/Stalybridge
- 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Manchester Victoria runs on to Blackburn.
- The frequency of trains on the Atherton line reduces to 2 trains per hour off-peak and 3 trains an hour in the peak, with the remaining trains running with 4 carriages to maintain capacity.

The changes simplify and standardise the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Southport is diverted away from Manchester Piccadilly/Alderley Edge to Manchester Victoria/Stalybridge
- 1 train per hour from Kirkby to Manchester Victoria run on to Blackburn.
- The frequency of trains on the Atherton line reduces to 2 trains per hour off-peak and 3 trains per hour in the peak, with the remaining trains running with 4 carriages to maintain capacity.
- A peak-only train connects Southport with Manchester Oxford Road, running semi-fast via the Atherton line calling at Hindley. Atherton and Walkden.

The changes simplify and standardise the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

Preston to Manchester via Chorley

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 fast train per hour from Scotland to Manchester Airport (with limited calls at Bolton) via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 semi-fast train per hour from Blackpool to Manchester Airport via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 stopping train per hour from Blackpool to Hazel Grove via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 stopping train per hour from Preston to Manchester Victoria.
Option A	• 1 fast train per hour from Scotland to Manchester Airport, in off-peak only, via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 semi-fast train per hour from Blackpool to Manchester Airport (in peak periods only), via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour from Cumbria to Manchester Airport via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 2 stopping trains per hour from Blackpool to Hazel Grove via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.

Option B	• 1 fast train per hour from Scotland to Manchester Airport (with full calls at Bolton and additionally at Chorley) via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour from Cumbria to Manchester Airport via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 2 stopping trains per hour from Blackpool to Alderley Edge via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.
Option C	• 1 fast train per hour from Scotland to Manchester Airport via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour from Cumbria to Manchester Airport via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 2 stopping trains per hour from Blackpool to Manchester Airport via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • In the peak periods, 1 stopping train per hour from Preston to Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option A**, the following changes are made:

- 2 trains per hour run as stopping services between Blackpool and Hazel Grove, via Manchester Piccadilly.
- The current hourly stopping train from Preston to Manchester Victoria does not run.
- The Cumbria to Manchester Airport train runs on this route rather than via Wigan, calling at Chorley and Bolton.
- In peak periods, the Scotland to Manchester train would run via Wigan North Western (not Bolton), being replaced on the Bolton line by a Blackpool to Manchester Airport train calling at the larger stations.

The changes improve the pattern of peak capacity for access to Manchester Piccadilly and simplify the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes are made:

- 2 trains per hour run as stopping services between Blackpool and Alderley Edge, via Manchester Piccadilly.
- The current hourly stopping train from Preston to Manchester Victoria does not run.
- The Cumbria to Manchester Airport train runs on this route rather than via Wigan calling at Chorley and Bolton.
- The Scotland to Manchester Airport service will call every hour at Bolton and Chorley for all journeys.

The changes improve the pattern of peak capacity for access to Manchester Piccadilly and simplify the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- 2 trains per hour run as stopping services between Blackpool and Manchester Airport, via Manchester Piccadilly.
- The hourly stopping train from Preston to Manchester Victoria only runs in the peaks.
- The Cumbria to Manchester Airport train runs on this route rather than via Wigan calling at Chorley and Bolton.

The changes improve the pattern of peak capacity for access to Manchester Piccadilly and simplify the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

Blackburn to Manchester via Darwen

The current planned service pattern includes:

- 1 train per hour from Clitheroe to Rochdale via Manchester Victoria.
- 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Rochdale via Manchester Victoria, extending to Clitheroe in the peaks.

In **Timetable Options A and B**, no changes are made to the structure of these services.

In **Timetable C**, additional calls are added to these services, which operate at 30 minute intervals. This provides a more regular service at local stations including Moses Gate, Farnworth and Kearsley; with a standard half hourly pattern of service as compared to the hourly service offered in all other options.

Leeds to Manchester via Rochdale

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 train per hour from Leeds to Manchester Victoria via Bradford. • 1 train per hour from Leeds to Chester via Manchester Victoria and Warrington Bank Quay. • 1 train per hour from Leeds to Wigan via Dewsbury, Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Wigan via Todmorden, Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 2 trains per hour from Rochdale to Blackburn / Clitheroe via Manchester Victoria and Bolton.
Option A	• 1 train per hour from Leeds to Wigan via Bradford, Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 1 train per hour from Leeds to Chester via Manchester Victoria and Warrington Bank Quay. • 1 train per hour from Leeds to Wigan via Dewsbury, Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Kirkby via Manchester Victoria and Atherton.

	• 2 trains per hour from Rochdale to Blackburn / Clitheroe via Manchester Victoria and Bolton.
Option B	• 2 trains per hour from Leeds to Manchester Victoria via Bradford. • 1 train per hour from Leeds to Wigan via Dewsbury, Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Kirkby via Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 2 trains per hour from Rochdale to Blackburn / Clitheroe via Manchester Victoria and Bolton.
Option C	• 2 trains per hour from Leeds to Chester via Manchester Victoria and Warrington Bank Quay. • 1 train per hour from Leeds to Wigan via Dewsbury, Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Kirkby via Manchester Victoria and Atherton. • 2 trains per hour from Rochdale to Blackburn / Clitheroe via Manchester Victoria and Bolton.

In **Timetable Option A**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Leeds to Manchester Victoria via Bradford would be extended to Wigan via Atherton.
- 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Wigan is extended to Kirkby via Atherton.

The changes simplify and standardise the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes would be made:

- 2 trains per hour run from Leeds to Manchester Victoria via Bradford (with no extension to Chester once per hour).
- 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Wigan is extended to Kirkby via Atherton.

The changes simplify and standardise the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- 2 trains per hour would run from Leeds to Chester via Manchester Victoria and Warrington Bank Quay.
- 1 train per hour from Blackburn to Wigan would be extended to Kirkby via Atherton.

The changes simplify and standardise the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria, providing a standard 30 minute interval for services on this route.

Stalybridge to Manchester Victoria (Local Trains)

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Southport via Manchester Victoria and Westhoughton.
Option A	• 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to North Wales via Manchester Victoria and Warrington Bank Quay. • 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Southport via Manchester Victoria and Westhoughton.
Option B	• 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Chester via Manchester Victoria and Warrington Bank Quay. • 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Southport via Manchester Victoria and Westhoughton.
Option C	• 2 trains per hour from Stalybridge to Southport via Manchester Victoria and Westhoughton.

In **Timetable Option A**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Manchester Victoria is replaced by a train running through to North Wales via Warrington Bank Quay.

The change is designed to simplify the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Manchester Victoria is replaced by a train running through to Chester via Warrington Bank Quay.

The change simplifies the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- 1 train per hour from Stalybridge to Manchester Victoria would be replaced by a second train per hour running on to Southport via Westhoughton.

The change simplifies and standardises the routeing of trains around Manchester Victoria.

Huddersfield to Manchester via TransPennine Main Line

December 2019 service pattern	• 2 fast trains per hour to Liverpool, from Edinburgh and Scarborough, via Manchester Victoria. • 2 fast trains per hour to Manchester Airport, coming from Newcastle and Redcar Central, via Manchester Victoria, Manchester Oxford Road, and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 train per hour from Hull to Manchester Piccadilly, making local stops between Huddersfield and Stalybridge in peak periods. • 1 stopping train per hour from Huddersfield to Manchester Piccadilly.
Option A	• As per current.
Option B	• 2 fast trains per hour to Liverpool, from Edinburgh and Scarborough via Manchester Victoria. • 1 fast train per hour from Redcar Central to Manchester Airport via Manchester Victoria, Manchester Oxford Road, and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast trains per hour from Newcastle to Manchester Victoria. • 1 train per hour from Hull to Manchester Piccadilly, making local stops between Huddersfield and Stalybridge all day. • 1 stopping train per hour from Huddersfield to Manchester Piccadilly.
Option C	• 2 fast trains per hour to Liverpool, from Edinburgh and Scarborough via Manchester Victoria. • 1 fast train per hour from Redcar Central to Manchester Airport via Manchester Victoria, Manchester Oxford Road, and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour from Newcastle to Manchester Airport via Manchester Victoria, Manchester Oxford Road, and Manchester Piccadilly (in peak periods, only running to Manchester Victoria from Newcastle). • 1 train per hour from Hull to Manchester Piccadilly, making local stops between Huddersfield and Stalybridge all day. • 1 stopping train per hour from Huddersfield to Manchester Piccadilly.

In **Timetable Option A**, no changes are made to the structure of these services.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes are made:

- The Hull to Manchester Piccadilly train calls at all stations between Huddersfield and Stalybridge, providing 2 trains per hour for these intermediate stations.
- The Newcastle to Manchester Airport train is curtailed at Manchester Victoria; those travelling to Manchester Airport change trains at Huddersfield or take a Manchester Piccadilly service and change there.

The changes provide a more regular service at local stations and reduces the number of trains using the Castlefield Corridor and Manchester Airport.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- The Hull to Manchester train calls at all stations between Huddersfield and Stalybridge, providing 2 trains per hour for these intermediate stations.

- The Newcastle to Manchester Airport train is curtailed at Manchester Victoria in the peaks; those travelling to Manchester Airport would need to change trains at Huddersfield or take a Manchester Piccadilly service and change there.

The changes offer standardisation of the pattern for trains between Huddersfield and Manchester, providing a more regular service at local stations.

Sheffield to Manchester via Hope Valley Line

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 stopping train per hour between Manchester Piccadilly and Sheffield skip-stopping during the off-peak. • 1 fast train per hour between Cleethorpes and Manchester Airport via Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour between Liverpool and Nottingham (and Norwich) via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.
Option A	As per current.
Option B	• 1 stopping train per hour between Manchester Piccadilly and Sheffield. • 1 fast train per hour between Cleethorpes and Liverpool via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly. • 1 fast train per hour between Nottingham and Liverpool via Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly.
Option C	As per Option B.

The current planned service pattern includes:

- 1 stopping train per hour between Manchester and Sheffield.
- 1 fast train per hour between Cleethorpes and Manchester Airport.
- 1 fast train per hour between Nottingham and Liverpool.

In **Timetable Option A**, no changes are made to the structure of these services.

In **Timetable Options B and C**, the following changes are made:

- The Cleethorpes train runs to Liverpool, not the Airport; those travelling beyond Manchester to Liverpool get an extra service.
- Passengers for the Airport to change at Piccadilly, with cross-platform interchange and a frequent service.
- The Cleethorpes and Nottingham trains would be exactly 30 minutes apart, providing an even interval service.

The changes simplify and reduce the number of train movements on the approach to Manchester Piccadilly.

South Manchester Long Distance Services

No changes are proposed to the structure of long distance services in south Manchester, including trains to London Euston, Birmingham and the South West and South Wales.

South Manchester Local Services

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 train per hour from Liverpool to Crewe via Manchester Piccadilly and Airport. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe via Stockport. • 1 train per hour from Blackpool to Hazel Grove. • 1 train per hour from Southport to Alderley Edge. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Stoke. • 2 trains per hour from Piccadilly to Buxton. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Chester. • In peak periods, additional services from Stoke and Alderley Edge to Piccadilly, and from Chester to Stockport
Option A	• 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe via Manchester Airport. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe via Stockport. • 2 trains per hour from Blackpool to Hazel Grove. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Alderley Edge. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Stoke. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Buxton (increasing to 2 trains per hour in peak periods). • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Chester. • In peak periods, additional services from Stoke and Alderley Edge to Piccadilly, and from Chester to Stockport
Option B	• 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe via Manchester Airport. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe via Styal. • 2 trains per hour from Blackpool to Alderley Edge. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Stoke. • 2 trains per hour from Piccadilly to Buxton. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Chester. • In peak periods, 1 train per hour from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove. • In peak periods, additional services from Stoke to Piccadilly, and from Chester to Stockport
Option C	• 2 trains per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe via Manchester Airport. • 2 trains per hour from Piccadilly to Alderley Edge. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Stoke. • 2 trains per hour from Piccadilly to Buxton. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to North Wales via Chester running semi-fast. • 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Chester. • In peak periods, 1 train per hour from Wigan North Western to Hazel Grove. • In peak periods, additional services from Stoke to Piccadilly.

At present, calls at stations between Manchester Piccadilly and the Airport are picked up in other trains serving Manchester Airport, leading to an uneven calling pattern.

In **Timetable Option A**, the following changes are made:

- The 1 train per hour to the Airport and Crewe begins at Piccadilly (rather than Liverpool), calling all stations to Alderley Edge.
- The 1 train per hour to Alderley Edge begins at Piccadilly (rather than Southport).
- The Blackpool to Hazel Grove service increases to 2 trains per hour.

- The 2 trains per hour to Buxton runs during peak periods only, with 1 train per hour in the off-peak.

The changes provide more even calling patterns and reduce the number of trains using the Castlefield Corridor and Manchester Piccadilly.

In **Timetable Option B**, the following changes are made:

- The 1 train per hour to the Airport and Crewe begin at Piccadilly (rather than Liverpool).
- Alderley Edge services become 2 trains per hour all day and begin at Blackpool (rather than Southport).
- 1 train per hour from Piccadilly to Crewe runs via Styal, rather than via Stockport (but not calling at the Airport).
- 2 trains per hour continue to run to Buxton, but trains to Hazel Grove only run in the peaks only, provided by a Hazel Grove to Wigan North Western service.
- The airport line gains a regular pattern all stations local service.

The changes provide more even calling patterns and reduce the number of trains using the Castlefield Corridor and Manchester Piccadilly.

In **Timetable Option C**, the following changes are made:

- Stopping trains to the Airport and Crewe run at 30-minute intervals and begin at Piccadilly (rather than Liverpool), but both diverted to run via the Airport, giving a regular pattern of calls along the Airport line.
- Alderley Edge services become 2 trains per hour all day and begin at Piccadilly (rather than Southport).
- 2 trains per hour run to Buxton at 30 minute intervals, but trains to Hazel Grove only run in the peaks only, provided by a Hazel Grove to Wigan North Western service.
- A second train per hour is provided on the Mid-Cheshire line, running from North Wales to Piccadilly and calling at Northwich, Knutsford, Altrincham and Stockport.

The changes provide more even calling patterns and reduce the number of trains using the Castlefield Corridor and Manchester Piccadilly.

Routes from the East to Manchester

No changes are proposed to the structure of services in east Manchester, including local stopping trains to:

- Hadfield and Glossop
- New Mills Central and Chinley
- Marple and Rose Hill Marple

In **Timetable Option C**, Rose Hill Marple trains calls at all stations every half hour, rather than missing some out calls as at present.

Manchester Airport

The table below shows the pattern of services to Manchester Airport. The reasons for these changes have been set out under the descriptions above.

December 2019 service pattern	• 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Glasgow / Edinburgh. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Barrow / Windermere. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Blackpool. • 1 train per hour from Crewe to Liverpool via Newton-le-Willows. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Liverpool via Warrington Central. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Redcar Central via Leeds. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Newcastle via Leeds. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Cleethorpes. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to North Wales.
Option A	• 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Glasgow / Edinburgh. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Barrow / Windermere. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Liverpool via Newton-le-Willows. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Liverpool via Warrington Central. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Redcar Central via Leeds. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Newcastle via Leeds. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Cleethorpes. • 1 train per hour from Crewe to Manchester Piccadilly. • Peak only, 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Blackpool.
Option B	• 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Glasgow / Edinburgh. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Barrow / Windermere. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Liverpool via Newton-le-Willows. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Redcar Central via Leeds. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to North Wales. • 1 train per hour from Crewe to Manchester Piccadilly.
Option C	• 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Glasgow / Edinburgh. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Barrow / Windermere. • 2 trains per hour from Manchester Airport to Blackpool. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Redcar Central via Leeds. • 1 train per hour from Manchester Airport to Newcastle via Leeds (off-peak only). • 2 trains per hour from Crewe to Manchester Piccadilly.