

**Liverpool City Region**  
**Port Access Steering Group**

**Progress Update – October 2015**

- The growth of the Port of Liverpool will bring major economic benefits for the Liverpool City Region and the wider national economy by increasing opportunities for trade with the rest of the world, including key markets in India, the Far East and the Americas.
- For the Port to be successful, it needs to have good transport access, enabling the efficient and timely movement of large quantities of freight by rail, road and water.
- The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is working with the private sector and Government agencies to develop and deliver transport measures that will improve access by rail, road and water to the Port to facilitate the planned Port expansion. Transport improvements will also support continued regeneration and investment in North Liverpool/South Sefton.
- A work programme has been developed to identify the improvements needed to both local and strategic road and rail networks to improve transport access to the Port. This work programme is being delivered and work currently in progress includes :
  - An assessment of the demand for rail freight capacity from the northern ports and on the trans-Pennine rail routes, commissioned and paid for by the Department for Transport, through the Strategic Freight Network Steering Group, started in 2014. The work was carried out by Network Rail and has identified a series of recommended upgrades to the local and strategic rail network, including specific proposals to improve the Bootle Branch line connection to the Port to be delivered within the current funding period (before 2019), i.e.
    - Doubling of the short stretch of single line track at the entrance to the Port to enable the operation of two freight paths per hour;
    - Increasing the line speed on the Bootle Branch Line to enable heavier trains to climb the uphill section towards Walton and Anfield without the need for a banking engine;
    - Improvements to signals at Earlestown West junction to improve capacity to the West Coast Main Line at Chat Moss.
  - A review of the potential for providing a direct rail connection to the new deep water berth (Liverpool 2) at the Port of Liverpool is being undertaken by Peel Ports and proposals to compensate for the impacts on Seaforth Nature Reserve are being developed;
  - Peel Ports continue to promote use of the Ship Canal and they have implemented a Memorandum of Understanding with Warrington BC relating to the operation of the Ship Canal and the opening of the swing bridges in the Warrington area;

- Proposals have been developed to upgrade the traffic signals along the A5036 and provide advanced warning signs to improve traffic management along the route, and opportunities for funding this work are being explored;
- A review of existing and future demand for HGV parking has been commissioned by Sefton Council on behalf of the Combined Authority in 2015 and this will determine whether new parking provision may be needed in the future;
- In the long term (post 2020), a major new road improvement will be needed to meet the forecast demand for road access to the Port. A commitment to develop a scheme was included in the Road Investment Strategy published in December 2014. Highways England has commissioned consultants to undertake a detailed assessment of the options, taking account of traffic impacts and the economic and environmental impacts, so that the best option for the future can be identified. An extensive public engagement to consider the available options is planned for early 2016 and the results of the options assessment and the public engagement are currently expected in the summer/autumn of 2016.

➤ As well as the significant economic benefits and job opportunities provided through port expansion, there are potential environmental impacts on local communities. To address this, the Combined Authority is working with Peel Ports and the local communities to ensure that these impacts are reduced, mitigated and managed as far as possible.

- The Ecostars fleet recognition scheme to reduce emissions from HGVs and other fleet vehicles has been operating for two years in Sefton, and the possibility of the scheme being expanded across the whole City Region is being considered.
- Sefton Council has completed the first phase of a programme of local accessibility and environmental improvements in the Seaforth area and a second phase is planned for the start of 2016.
- A new cycle route along the A565 is also being constructed, including the installation of safe crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at the entrance to the Port.

➤ Other work already completed includes :

- A technical study to identify the requirements for freight and distribution centres across the City Region, funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership, completed in 2013;
- A rail strategy for the Port of Liverpool commissioned and paid for by Peel Ports, completed in 2013;
- A wider rail strategy for the City Region, commissioned and paid for by Merseytravel, completed and published in May 2014;

- A review of the feasibility of a future rail connection to Canada Dock in the context of future expectations for rail freight demand at the Port of Liverpool, completed in summer 2015;
- A major junction improvement at the A5036 Princess Way/Bridge Road roundabout, funded by the Department for Transport through the national pinch point programme, completed in spring 2015;

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