

Liverpool City Region
Port Access Steering Group

Progress Update – January 2017

- 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 that identifies the improvements needed to local and strategic road and rail networks to improve transport access to the Port. Work currently in progress includes :
 - Following an assessment by Network Rail of the demand for rail freight capacity from the northern ports and on trans-Pennine routes, a series of upgrades to the local and strategic rail network were identified. Once implemented, these improvements will double the rail capacity on the Bootle Branch line connection to the Port, 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 due to be implemented in 2017;
 - 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, also due in 2017;
 - Improvements to signals at Earlestown West junction to improve capacity to the West Coast Main Line at Chat Moss.
 - Proposals for providing a direct rail connection to the new deep water berth (Liverpool 2) at the Port of Liverpool and to compensate for the impacts on Seaforth Nature Reserve are being developed by Peel Ports;
 - Peel Ports continue to increase the use of the Ship Canal for inland shipping and the 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 is working effectively;
 - 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 commissioned by Sefton Council on behalf of the Combined Authority in 2015 identified a potential need for new parking provision in the future. Further work commissioned in 2016 confirmed the future demand and the feasibility of some potential sites was assessed. There are significant difficulties with bringing forward any of the sites considered, so the importance of providing a HGV parking site in the City Region needs to be considered further by the Combined Authority.
- Even with an increase in rail freight and inland shipping, 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 national Road Investment Strategy published in December 2014. Technical consultants have completed a detailed assessment of the options on behalf of Highways England, 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 consultation has started in January 2017. Two main options are being considered and the public consultation will help to inform the decision on which option should be taken forward. Details are available at <http://roads.highways.gov.uk/projects/a5036-port-of-liverpool-access/> The results of the consultation and an announcement of the preferred option are expected in late spring or early summer 2017.

➤ 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 three years in Sefton and is about to be extended for a further two years.
- Sefton Council has completed a programme of local accessibility and environmental improvements in the Seaforth area.
- A new cycle route along the A565 has been constructed, including the installation of safe crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at the entrance to the Port. This will connect to the cycle route planned along Regent Road as part of the North Liverpool Key Corridor Improvement Scheme being developed by Liverpool City Council.

➤ 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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