

***Winner of CILT award for best practice in passenger transport (2013)***

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Hendy Consultation  
4th Floor Department for Transport  
Great Minister House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London,  
SW1P 4DR

17<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Consultation on the re-planning of Network Rail's Investment Programme.**

TravelWatch NorthWest (TWNW) is an independent Community Interest Company representing all public transport users in NW England. We are pleased to give our views as follows on the above consultation.

Not unexpectedly, we want to see the highest priority for the implementation of North West, TransPennine and other electrification schemes affecting our region and whilst regretting the slippage in the investment programme we look forward to the various schemes coming to fruition. We trust that there is no further slippage.

Capacity improvements providing the opportunity for additional services and longer trains are mentioned as outputs in CP5 and this is welcome. It will mean the necessity to have stations that can accommodate longer trains and this may entail some lengthening of platforms.

We note that "Transpennine Route Upgrade – Intermediate interventions" will commence in CP5. It is important that on this busy route comprehensive line capacity improvements looking 30 years ahead are carried out before the OHL masts are concreted in. As well higher frequency TPE services there are important local services to be taken into account.

We share the concerns of the Lakes Line Rail User Group about the status of electrification of the Oxenholme to Windermere Branch.

On 28th November 2014 Baroness Kramer, a Minister at the DfT in the then Coalition Government, visited Windermere Station and announced that the scheme to electrify the line would be completed in time for the December 2017 timetable (already one year later than originally intended). She also stated that £16m had been ring-fenced for the project. The Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin had also visited Windermere the previous year to state that the line would be electrified.

Clearly there has been substantial slippage. It is not entirely clear but the Hendy report puts this line at only GRIP Stage 3. To complicate the problem further, we understand that Arriva Rail North is expecting to utilise electric rolling stock on the line from December 2017, and has signed contracts accordingly. The December 2017 timetable requirement is that 4 trains each day will operate between Manchester Airport and Windermere. However this service is not sustainable by the 75mph rolling stock class 156s which will be operating the services by that time following the return of FTPE's 4 remaining 2-car class 170s to the ROSCO.

It is essential that the work to electrify the Windermere Branch is completed at the earliest opportunity, especially in light of its transfer to the new Northern Franchise and FTPE's need to reclaim their class 185 rolling stock to compensate for the shortfall in their services across the Pennines created by the remainder of their class 170 units being taken to operate services further south. Arriva Rail North needs the line to be electrified in order to fulfil the commitment in the franchise contract to operate Northern Connect services to Windermere.

Further clarification on this essential scheme is needed.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond

Yours faithfully

*John A Moorhouse*

John Moorhouse  
Company Secretary