

The West of England Partnership

Great Western Route Utilisation Strategy

Evidence Submission

June 2008



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Introduction

This report outlines the West of England's proposed rail schemes for inclusion in the Great Western Route Utilisation Strategy process. It is intended to guide Network Rail in the identifying of gaps in the network and the developing of options to resolve them. We consider that all our schemes contribute to the efficiency, effectiveness and development of the rail network.

Issues for the RUS to consider

In putting forward our list of rail schemes we need to draw to Network Rail's attention the following issues.

1) Growth Agenda

The West of England area produces a quarter of the South West's economic output with a fifth of the population. We are one of the fastest growing and prosperous sub regions in Europe as well as being both a Core and Science City. Furthermore we are a growth point area earmarked to take faster levels of growth and deliver the Government's new housing agenda.

Within the West of England the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (June 2006) proposes 92,500 extra homes and 100,000 jobs over the period 2006 to 2026. This includes 10,500 houses adjoining South West Bristol close to the mainline and Portishead railway, 6,000 in the South East and 8,000 to the North and North East of the city with urban extensions at Emerson's Green and Stoke Gifford, 3,300 between Bristol Parkway and the M32, 40,000 across the rest of the Bristol urban area and 12,000 in Weston-super-Mare.

The Examination in Public (EIP) Panel Report (December 2007) on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) increased these figures to 102,000 homes and 137,200 jobs. In particular they singled out Yate for 5,000 additional homes linked to the provision of the Yate turnback and development of the rail service. Further urban extensions are proposed for 3,000 homes at Keynsham and 2,500 at Filton/Cribbs Causeway. Additionally there is background growth across existing urban areas and their stations.

Considerable growth is expected at Taunton, Gloucester/Cheltenham, Westbury/Trowbridge and other smaller towns all served by rail. The EIP Panel stated particular consideration should be given to the role of the rail network in connecting the West Wiltshire area to Bath as an integral part of a wider sub-regional network. Rail, therefore, will have a significant contribution to make in terms of providing sustainable transport links to all these growth areas.

The EIP Panel Report defined the key transport corridors for the West of England as:

- **Exeter to London via Bristol** (directly relevant to Great Western RUS)
- **Bristol/Bath to the South Coast** (directly relevant to Great Western RUS)
- **Bristol to the North via Gloucester/Cheltenham** (directly relevant to Great Western RUS)

2) Previous Demand Forecasts

Along with the South West Regional Assembly we have argued that the overall estimates of demand for passenger growth in our area need to take account of both past growth over the last 10 years and future growth as identified in the RSS. Additional capacity will be required to meet future, as well as current, demand for rail travel. The Growth Agenda, highlighted above, will increase this pressure. We are not confident that the Regional Planning Assessment (RPA) has fully grasped the implications of all this growth. This is supported by recent patronage growth figures which are significantly higher than the RPA forecast. The RUS, therefore, should recommend the updating of the rail industry forecasting handbook to do so.

It is worth recalling the continued growth in rail use in our area as the following figures for 2006/07 from the Office of Rail Regulation show.

Bath Spa +8.70%
Bristol Parkway +7.96%
Clifton Down +18.05%
Keynsham +11.67%
Parson Street +34.14%
Worle +10.41%
Yate +18.33%
Yatton +10.16%

3) Studies

Recent studies supporting the need for rail investment in the West of England area include:

- Portishead Rail Line Study, North Somerset Council, May 2008
- Our Future Transport – Transport Innovation Fund bid, West of England Partnership, October 2007 to date
- Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study, GOSW, June 2006
- The Mainline They Shouldn't Ignore – South Coast to Bristol and South Wales Route, Rail Passenger Committee, April 2004
- Bath/Bristol to South Coast Study, GOSW, February 2004
- Bristol – Avonmouth – Filton Rail Routes Study, JSPTU, July 2003
- Gloucester – Bristol – Weston-super-Mare Rail Study, November 2001

List of Schemes

Table One outlines each scheme with their inputs, outputs and links to other issues and plans. Schemes are grouped under three headings: new services, capacity improvements required to facilitate new services and stations. Figure One shows their location.

The schemes reflect the rail objectives of our Joint Local Transport Plan for:

- Fast, comfortable and reliable local passenger train services.
- Clock face timetables with at least a half hourly service throughout the day.
- Cross - Bristol train services.
- Rolling stock strategy to provide for future demand over the next 10 years and replace older train units.
- Additional track and resignalling to support reliability and future growth.
- First class station interchanges improving accessibility for wheelchair users, car parking, signing, bus/rail connections, waiting facilities, passenger security and travel information.

‘Bristol Metro’ - Cross Bristol Train Services

Key among the list of schemes in Table One is the proposal for developing a ‘Bristol Metro’ style network of cross Bristol train services. Considerable work has already been undertaken on developing this concept with:

- Half hourly clock face services with separation of intercity, regional and local services
- Local network with proposed end points of Taunton, Gloucester, Cardiff and Westbury
- Cardiff to Portsmouth inter urban service and new all stations service Cardiff to Westbury
- New infrastructure including Weston-super-Mare bay platform, Yate turnback, reopened Portishead line, third line on the Filton Bank and Westbury station
- Four car trains standard with possible extension to six along with platform lengthening

A technical report on the service specification will be provided to Network Rail.

Meeting Other Objectives

Our schemes contribute to the RUS objectives to make effective and efficient use and development of the route capacity available.

The schemes meet the aims of the South West Regional Assembly’s Rail Prospectus for improving inter/intra regional connections, supporting growth in key cities and towns, improved access to Bristol International Airport and

support tourism. Key corridors identified in the Rail Prospectus and which support the Regional Spatial Strategy are:

- Weston-super-Mare to Bristol to South Wales
- West Wiltshire to Bath to Bristol
- Cheltenham/Gloucester to Bristol

Several of the schemes in Table One are in Network Rail's Business Plan (April 2008) for 2009 to 2014. They include Worle Junction (2009), Bristol Parkway 4th platform (2009/10), additional vehicles for half hourly cross Bristol services (2009/10), Bath Spa resignalling (2010/11), Weston-super-Mare bay platform and Yate turnback (both 2011/12 and subject to third party funding).

Our Future Transport

As part of the work in developing a possible bid to the Government's Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) the West of England published its 'Our Future Transport' in October 2007. Setting out our transport vision to 2026 it includes improvements to local rail services considered vital ahead and alongside the potential implementation of congestion charging in 2013. TIF could help bring forward some rail schemes in the RUS but given the uncertainty of congestion charging being introduced future funding can not be guaranteed.

Future Engagement with the RUS

We are happy to work closely with Network Rail during the option assessment stage of the RUS and we will provide more information and technical evidence as required.

West of England Partnership
30/06/2008

Table One: West of England Route Utilisation Schemes

Scheme	Inputs	Outputs	Links to
Services			
'Bristol Metro' half hourly cross Bristol train services	Additional rolling stock and services. Capacity improvements – see below.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use on key corridors. Deliver Bristol Metro.	JLTP Rail Action Plan RSS/Growth Agenda – West of England and West Wiltshire Network Rail Business Plan Rail Prospectus Our Future Transport
Half hourly Severn Beach line services	Additional rolling stock. Double tracking Montpelier to Clifton Down.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Our Future Transport
Portishead line reopened	Relay track to Portishead. New stations at Portishead, Pill and Ashton Gate. Additional rolling stock and services.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use and congestion on A369 Portishead to Bristol corridor and at M5 Junction 19.	JLTP Rail Action Plan RSS/Growth Agenda 10,500 homes South West Bristol and growth in Portishead.
Passenger services on Henbury loop between Filton and Avonmouth	New signals, double track at Filton and St Andrew's Road junctions and station at Henbury. Additional rolling stock and services.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use in the North Fringe.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Growth agenda 2,600 homes at Filton/Cribbs Causeway
Development of clockface service pattern Weston-super-Mare to London Paddington and to South	Hourly all day or hourly peak/two hourly off peak services. Additional rolling stock.	Increase patronage and serve Bristol Travel to Work Area. Improved inter-regional connectivity.	JLTP Rail Action Plan RSS/Growth Agenda 12,000 homes Weston-super-Mare

Scheme	Inputs	Outputs	Links to
West/Midlands/North.	Capacity improvements – see below.	Support employment growth in Weston-super-Mare.	
Chippenham to Bath/Bristol corridor development of services including Corsham station	Additional rolling stock and services. Reinstatement of redundant platform at Chippenham.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use on Bristol – Bath – Chippenham corridor. Improved reliability and additional capacity for passenger services.	JLTP Rail Action Plan RSS/Growth Agenda Network Rail Business Plan (Chippenham platform) Our Future Transport
Bristol to non London stations in the south east including Oxford.	Additional rolling stock and services.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use on key corridors.	Network Rail RUS baseline evidence for non London trips.
Capacity Improvements required to facilitate enhanced services			
Yate turnback and Weston-super-Mare bay platform	Extend existing services. Additional rolling stock and services. Turnback and platform at Yate. Re-instate bay platform at Weston-super-Mare.	Increased patronage. Reduced car use on key corridors. Improved reliability of services and additional capacity to deliver enhanced cross Bristol 'Metro' service.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Growth agenda – 5,000 houses at Yate, 12,000 at Weston. Network Rail Business Plan Our Future Transport
Increase capacity at Bristol Temple Meads	3 rd line up Filton Bank. Reinstate platform 2. Additional track capacity to Parson Street. Additional capacity improvements including possible resignalling.	Improved reliability of services and additional capacity to deliver enhanced higher frequency cross Bristol 'Metro' service.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Our Future Transport

Scheme	Inputs	Outputs	Links to
Bath Spa	Repositioning of signals and capacity improvements between Bristol and Bath.	Improved reliability of services and additional capacity to deliver enhanced higher frequency cross Bristol 'Metro' service with additional stops at Keynsham and Oldfield Park.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Network Rail Business Plan RSS/Growth Agenda – 5,000 houses at Keynsham
Fourth platform at Bristol Parkway	Additional platform face.	Improved reliability of services and additional capacity to deliver enhanced higher frequency cross Bristol 'Metro' service.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Network Rail Business Plan
Dualling line to Weston-super-Mare	Dualling line from Worle Junction to Weston-super-Mare.	Improved reliability of services and additional capacity to deliver enhanced cross Bristol 'Metro' service.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Network Rail Business Plan (double line towards Weston Milton) RSS/Growth Agenda – 12,000 houses at Weston
Stations			
Pedestrian and cycle access at Bristol Parkway	New pedestrian/cycle route including tunnel under the embankment.	Increased modal share of trips to the station by cycling and walking. Reduced pressure on car parks.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Bristol Parkway Station Travel Plan
Longer platforms and improved facilities at Worle, Yatton and Nailsea	Additional services (Cross Country/High Speed Trains) to stop, providing links to/from London Paddington and Midlands/North of England.	Increase patronage and serve Bristol Travel to Work Area. Support employment growth in Weston-super-Mare.	JLTP Rail Action Plan

Scheme	Inputs	Outputs	Links to
Local Station Access Improvements	New lift at Weston-super-Mare, ramps at Keynsham and Nailsea, expanded car parks and other improvements.	Improved access for people with disabilities and mobility needs.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Disability Discrimination Act 1995
Corsham new station	Additional rolling stock and services.	New station serving Bath Travel to Work Area. Reduced car use on A4 corridor into Bath.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Our Future Transport
Charfield new station	Additional rolling stock and services.	New station serving Gloucester Travel to Work Area. Reduced car use on A38 corridor into Gloucester.	JLTP Rail Action Plan Our Future Transport
New station serving South West Bristol urban extension	Additional rolling stock and services.	New station serving Bristol Travel to Work Area. Reduced car use on A370/A38 corridor into Bristol.	RSS/Growth Agenda – 10,500 houses at South West Bristol

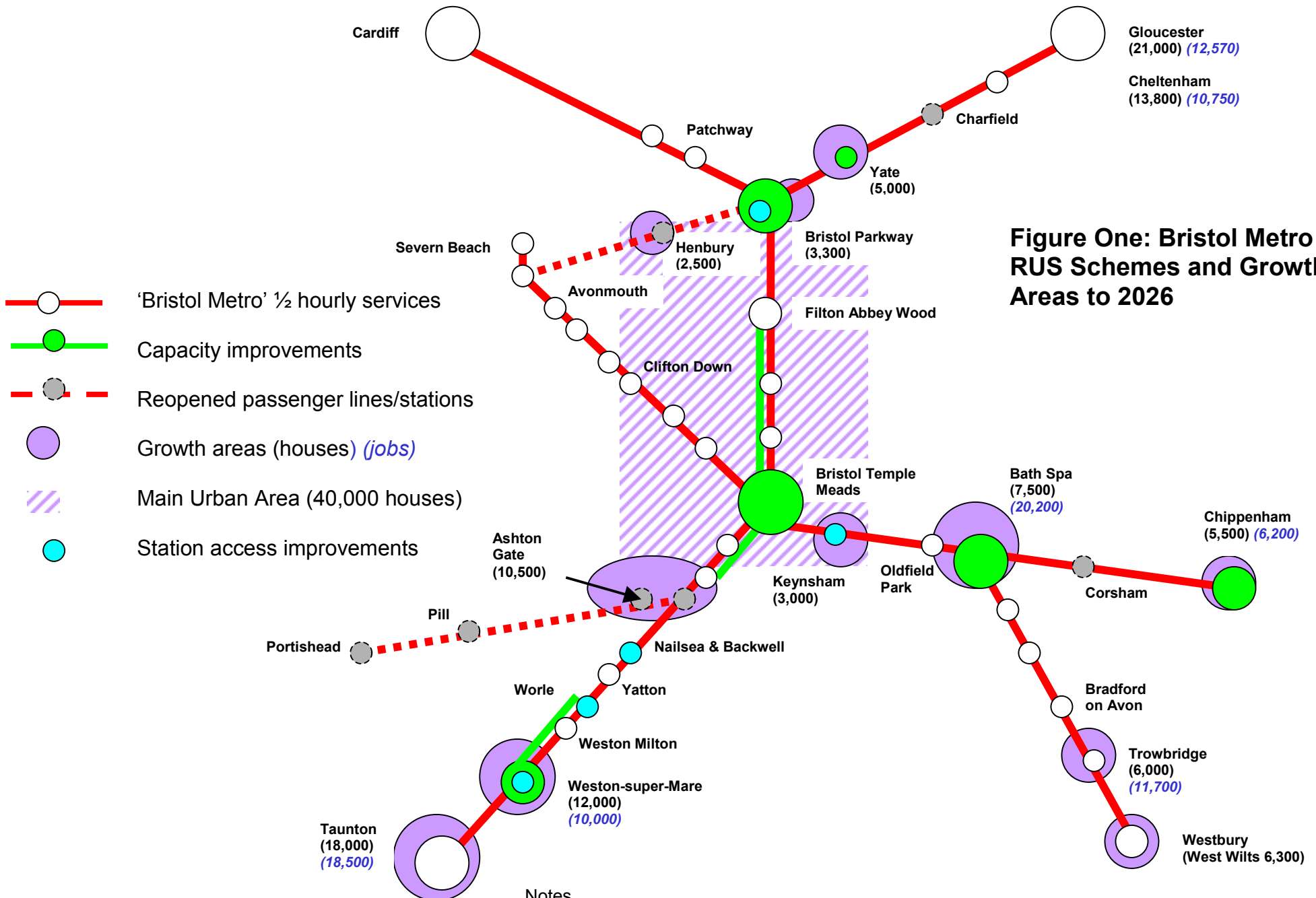


Figure One: Bristol Metro - RUS Schemes and Growth Areas to 2026

Notes
 For clarity some station names are omitted
 Housing and job figures are from the EIP Panel Report, December 2007
 Total for West of England area 102,000 houses and 137,200 jobs 2006 - 2026