

Rail Services

Building on its core rail connectivity assets, including excellent rail links on the West Coast Main Line (WCML) between Coventry, London and Birmingham, the Council has developed an ambitious evidence-based rail investment strategy. The strategy sets out a clear case for the need to radically improve rail services which support the economic travel to work area such as services on the north-south corridor between Coventry, the Thames Valley, Warwickshire and the East Midlands¹. Allied to this, the Council is investing in the delivery of the Coventry Station Masterplan which will result in improved integration between rail and other modes of transport and the adjacent Friargate regeneration scheme.

The delivery of the Coventry Station masterplan redevelopment will improve transport interchange facilities and enable the predicted growth in rail passengers to be accommodated. The scheme includes improvements to pedestrian accesses, car parking, bus interchange facilities, cycle parking and a new bay platform to facilitate the delivery of the NUCKLE rail scheme.

Existing stations at Tile Hill and Canley predominantly cater for local rail services between Coventry and Birmingham, although Tile Hill offers some longer distance journey options as far as London. Both stations also act as rail Park and Ride facilities, although the car parks continue to operate at, or near capacity. Measures which address capacity issues will be supported including better integration with bus and rapid transit networks, walking and cycling routes and appropriate capacity enhancements to station car parking.

Additional local rail stations on the WCML to the east of the city serving Willenhall and Binley would allow some of the strong local rail service demand to be met and support the regeneration and economic growth of this part of the city. However, this will need to be considered in the context of wider strategic rail industry plans which plan for capacity on the busy WCML. Options are also being explored for a new station in the south of the city to support new development growth. These stations are also identified in the West Midlands Strategic Plan.

Line capacity between Coventry and Birmingham is constrained which causes competition between fast long distance and local stopping services. It is clear that major infrastructure improvements will be required to meet the growing demands to support the growth of the city. Proposals to expand capacity on the WCML which support Coventry's rail connectivity objectives will be supported.

High Speed Rail (HS2) and West Coast Main Line (WCML)

The government is proposing to construct a new high-speed railway between London and the north called HS2. The first phase of this scheme includes a new station located close to Birmingham International station approximately four miles from the western boundary of Coventry. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council is promoting a masterplan called UK Central (UKC) which includes plans to create up to 100,000 new jobs and new housing growth.

It will be important that Coventry is well connected to UK Central and able to form part of a broader UK Central Plus economic offer supported by excellent highway and public transport services. This will enable Coventry to continue to develop and be a major sub-regional hub for growth supporting services and economic activity across the whole area. For example, significant benefits could be gained through improved connectivity to high profile employers and development sites which are located on linked economic growth corridors including the A45 / A46 and M6 including the University of Warwick, Jaguar Land Rover and the area around Whitley and Coventry airport. Existing constraints along these corridors may impede the demands of potential growth and it is likely therefore that measures may be required to improve connectivity along new and improved transport corridors in or adjacent to Coventry. Proposals which enhance that connectivity will be supported.

The construction of HS2 is likely to affect service patterns on the WCML to reflect the introduction of new high-speed services. It will be important that existing services which support the local growth agenda are protected, and opportunities are seized which support improved connectivity objectives in the Coventry Rail Investment Strategy.

Policy AC6: Rail

1. Proposals which improve the quality of local rail services and access to stations and rail interchange facilities will be supported. These include:
 - a) Improved access to rail stations, including HS2, by all modes of travel;
 - b) Improved interchange facilities between rail and other modes; and
 - c) Enhancements on the rail network which increase the frequency and quality of rail services which serve Coventry.
2. Measures which support the delivery of objectives in the Coventry Rail Investment Strategy for improved rail connectivity will be supported. This includes measures which facilitate improved rail services and supporting rail infrastructure on the Coventry north-south corridor between Leamington, Kenilworth, Coventry, Bedworth, Nuneaton and Leicestershire.
3. Proposals for additional local railway stations on the east-west and north/south rail corridor within Coventry will be supported where they are proven to be viable, support growth objectives and are consistent with the relevant national, regional or local rail strategies.
4. Further details are set out in the Coventry Connected SPD, Coventry Rail Investment Strategy and the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan.

¹ Coventry Rail Investment Strategy (2013)

