

## Leeds Bradford Airport Link Route & LBA Parkway Station: February 2019 Update

### Introduction

Leeds City Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) are working with partners, including Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC) and Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA), to implement proposals to improve transport connectivity to the airport and the wider area of NW Leeds. A period of public consultation is planned to commence mid-February 2019 around three options for an LBA Link Route, and proposals for the LBA Parkway Station.

### Role of the airport

The economic competitiveness of core cities such as Leeds is increasingly dependent on the ability of businesses to access international markets and there is strong evidence that good international connectivity by air supports the economy of the city. Growth of Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) will support this by providing a more extensive airline route network, enhancing the ability of Leeds City Region and its businesses to access global markets and attract inward investment and tourism.

LBA is already a huge asset for Leeds and Leeds City Region. It is one of the UK's fastest growing airports, supporting over 5,000 jobs and contributing £336m to the city region economy each year. The Department for Transport (DfT) has forecast that there is the potential to increase the number of passengers using the airport to 7.1 million per year by 2030 and to 9 million by 2050. There is potential to expand the airport's route network to open up new international connections, supporting international trade and doubling the number of supported jobs to over 10,000 by 2030.

Current surface access to LBA is poor with existing routes being affected by congestion, resulting in rat-running with associated negative impacts on local settlements. There is a likelihood that conditions will worsen without any infrastructure improvements, given the forecast growth of LBA coupled with the proposed employment allocation.

### Initial Consultation & Changing context

An initial period of public consultation was held in 2015-16 on broad proposals for an Airport Link Route. Many respondents called for more details on the options and support for a rail link to improve airport connectivity was high. The key points arising have been summarised and published [here](#).

Since this period of initial consultation was conducted, there have been considerable changes in the way we are looking at and planning for transport in Leeds. In May 2016, the DfT took the decision not to proceed with the proposed New Generation Transport (NGT) trolleybus scheme, but confirmed that the government investment could be retained to improve public transport in the city. This offered an unprecedented chance to review the transport plan for the city as a whole and has provided a unique opportunity to consider the wider options around improving surface access to the airport.

The resulting Leeds Public Transport Investment Package (LPTIP) includes proposals for a parkway station on the Leeds-Harrogate Line to serve LBA. We are now planning a period of joint public consultation around both schemes; the LBA Link Route (road) and LBA Parkway Station (rail) which together form a multi-modal package of enhancements.

### Proposals

Three options for the **LBA Link Route** are being progressed:

- Option A: Building of a new road and footway/cycleway from the A65, running along the eastern edge of the airport before joining the A658 to the north.
- Option B: Building a new road and footway/cycleway that follows the same initial path from the A65, runs to the south west of the airport before joining the A658 where it enters the runway tunnel.
- Option C: Upgrading the existing A65 and A658 around Rawdon and Yeadon to the airport. This would see junctions upgraded and where needed, some localised road widening to deliver the junction improvements.

The main objectives of the link route scheme, can be broadly summarised as:

- delivering benefits locally and regionally by helping facilitate forecast airport growth and increased local employment opportunities, improving the travel experience for all users to the airport; and

- Providing relief to local residents and road users by supporting the effective operation of the local highway and bus networks, including removing traffic from some less suitable local roads.

Funding for the development up to Outline Business Case (OBC) has been approved from the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund (WYPTF).

The **LBA Parkway Station** is being progressed through the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP) and will include a 350 space park and ride car park, a station building and bus interchange. The location, on the existing Leeds to Harrogate line, is constrained by railway geometry, topography and signalling. A footway/cycleway link to the residential area of Cookridge, east of the station, is also under consideration, which, if implemented, could enable more people to conveniently access train services and potentially reduce pressure on parking around Horsforth station, as well as providing benefit to local residents. Options will be presented around road access to LBA Parkway Station.

### **Wider connectivity**

Proposals to improve connectivity to LBA are being considered within the wider context of connectivity across North West Leeds. A strategic assessment of transport issues in North West Leeds is taking place to reflect key changes anticipated in the area including the forecast growth of Leeds Bradford Airport and the associated employment allocation identified through the Site Allocations Plan and concerns over the impact of current traffic levels. Schemes and projects have been identified and are progressing to help overcome existing issues, and pre-empt future needs. Notably there are proposals through the Corridor Improvement Programme (CIP) to improve junctions at Dawson's Corner, Fink Hill and Dyneley Arms. A feasibility study has recently commenced, funded through the WYPTF, into options for improving highway capacity on the A6120 Outer Ring Road between Pudsey and Horsforth.

A strategic study has been commissioned as part of the work on the LBA Link Route to guide the direction of the project and add robustness to the development of the OBC. The scope of this work is to provide a strategic context for the selection of the identified corridor for a link road, detail how the current proposals fit within and support the context of a wider, comprehensive transport network; and show how the proposals complement and link with other work streams including the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) process, planned transport infrastructure proposals and potential future schemes. The strategic context study will also identify any potential future need for additional, supportive improvements on the A65 between Horsforth Roundabout and the proposed link route.

### **Consultation approach**

We have new drawings and animations showing what the schemes could look like. We now require further feedback from local residents, businesses, passengers and all stakeholders who will benefit or be impacted by the LBA Link Route and LBA Parkway Station schemes. This feedback will help to inform and develop the business cases. Both schemes are still in the development stage, and whilst all technical details on the LBA Link Route are not fully completed, it has been agreed to consult on both schemes together, known as Phase 1a, with further technical information provided in Phase 1b later in 2019, so as to expedite delivery of the Parkway station if possible, subject to funding and approvals.

The Phase 1a consultation will be launched on the 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019, presenting the three options for the LBA Link Route, showing how these have developed since the initial engagement in 2015/16. This will also introduce the first look at the new LBA Parkway Station. We will be holding a number of public events within the local communities with representatives there to explain the project, answer questions and provide more information with everyone being encouraged to have their say via the online questionnaire.

Once the ongoing technical work has been completed, the next phase of the consultation, Phase 1b, will focus on the LBA Link Route with additional technical details available on the options. This will give an opportunity to provide feedback from the Phase 1a consultation earlier in the year on both schemes. At this stage we expect to be able to provide more information on the emerging preferred option.

### **Programme and Next Steps**

- *Initial Consultation (2015/16 complete)*
- Joint Public Consultation Phase 1a (18<sup>th</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019)
- Joint Public Consultation Phase 1b (mid-late 2019)
- Outline Business Case submission to WYCA early 2019 (Parkway); Autumn 2019 (Link Route)