

# **A REVIEW BY DVR OF THE SHEFFIELD CHAMBER'S EVENT SEEKING SUPPORT FOR A CENTRAL STATION FOR HS2 – 18<sup>TH</sup> FEB SHEFFIELD MEMORIAL HALL**

## **Never mind HS2 & 3 - HS4 is the future**

We cannot be sure whether the decision to locate the HS2 station at Meadowhall or Sheffield is of any consequence to Don Valley Railway.

However if HS2 is located at Sheffield Victoria we would have to deal with the issue of gaining access to the city centre.

If a supertram extension from Middlewood is selected, the route into Sheffield may have a longer journey time but will go closer to more popular destinations. Aligning DVR alongside HS2 may have many imponderables.

But then what people are saying is that HS3 (The High Speed Line from Manchester to Leeds) should have a wayward branch and link into Victoria too. Can such a line provide a local service for us? Who knows?

After attending Sheffield Chamber of Commerce's event rallying support for HS2 at Victoria, I was left bemused by:

- The fact that the campaign for this is disorganised and late. Possibly because of the ambivalence of other South Yorkshire Authorities, there is no evidence of a rail standard feasibility test having taken place, a useful tool surely.
- A Creative Sheffield spokesperson set out vague notions and statistics of "Regeneration" and "Capacity" but did not present cold-hard benefits very clearly.
- Henk Bouwmann, A Dutch Urbanist seemed to be urging us to tunnel underground and put the station beneath the Winter Gardens!
- The head of Leeds and West Yorkshire Chambers of Commerce set out the arguments that made to Government to successfully reposition Leeds terminal. Sadly the collaboration necessary for this is lacking in South Yorkshire.
- Justin Urquhart-Stewart flamboyantly set out that London is another planet and that we should get on with it, even though we haven't before disappearing – presumably back down south.

The Sheffield City Centre campaign is based on the very parochial view that it is obvious that the best place to put the station is in the city centre, however this view is not shared by our close neighbours or Network Rail.

So what is required is something supported by the whole Sheffield City Region, the Rail Industry, UK plc, and Northern Powerhouse partners that benefits planet London too.

**SO DON VALLEY RAILWAY BRINGS YOU THE SOLUTION HS4**

A “high-speed” (with “high speed” in the same parentheses as HS3) from Penistone, South Yorkshire to Purfleet in Essex. Odd destinations but hear it out.

Regardless of whether Sheffield or Meadowhall is the local station, if we get HS2 (a big IF), and HS3 is constructed along the Woodhead alignment through the tunnel veering off towards West Yorkshire somewhere near Penistone. The remainder of the Woodhead Route could be reinstated as an 80-90mph electrified railway. (with the branch into Stocksbridge of course!)

From Sheffield to east of Worksop the line should be upgraded to HS standard (200mph!) with a sweeping high speed connection to link into the East Coast Main Line somewhere near Tuxford (north of Newark) and from there south on the East Coast Main Line be upgraded to a 140/150mph maximum speed.

From somewhere south of Peterborough, a High Speed (200mph) link should be built to Cambridge and then the commuter line into Liverpool Street be improved to a higher speed (125mph) to Saffron Walden before a true High Speed Line turns into Stansted Airport (for global connections (or Ryanair’s global connections at least)) and then on towards our goal Purfleet in Essex.

Why should it go there? Because that is where HS1 From London to Europe crosses the Thames. So HS4 connects the North to Europe without the delay in London.

People in London may like this idea too! They don’t want a bunch of Northerners dragging those wheelie suitcases up and down Euston Road between the two terminals.

We can give them more than that too! What about a London Parkway Station (linked to a suitable East London tube station) so they can it to get to Paris too – they probably don’t want to go via Kings Cross either. They could park n ride at our station.

But seriously this could offer the following

- A Transpennine Upgrade – Four services an hour taking less than half an hour linking Sheffield to Manchester can bring in Hull Cleethorpes and Nottingham from East of the Pennines and Liverpool, Wales and Blackpool on the West
- Direct High Speed trains to Europe from the North and Scotland, for example, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Cambridge then Paris, Brussels or Rome
- It would make the East Coast Line quicker than HS2 to London from Scotland and Yorkshire. Currently a non-stop train from York to London takes 1 hour 50 minutes, HS2 brings this down by about 10-15 minutes but with the faster ECML journey time saving will be non-existent. This means that the Scotland HS Classic Compatible services could terminate at Birmingham and the onward paths to London used for other classic compatible services (for example Central Nottingham and Derby Stations to London).
- Liverpool to Liverpool Street Service via Manchester, Sheffield, Peterborough, Cambridge, Stansted, North London would create a viable North West to South East Cross-Country service. As well as offering intra-Northern

connectivity it links us to places where they've got two shillings to knock together as well.

- A Javelin style commuter service from Kings Lynn and Cambridge with M11 Parkway and M25 Essex Parkway stops into London via the Purfleet triangle into Stratford and Kings Cross or alternatively link into Crossrail and connect to the Docklands the City, West End and Heathrow could use the route
- It would offer a direct London Service from Central Sheffield, if Meadowhall is chosen, and
- It would offer diversionary options if HS2 is disrupted (e.g. Manchester – London) creating resilience.

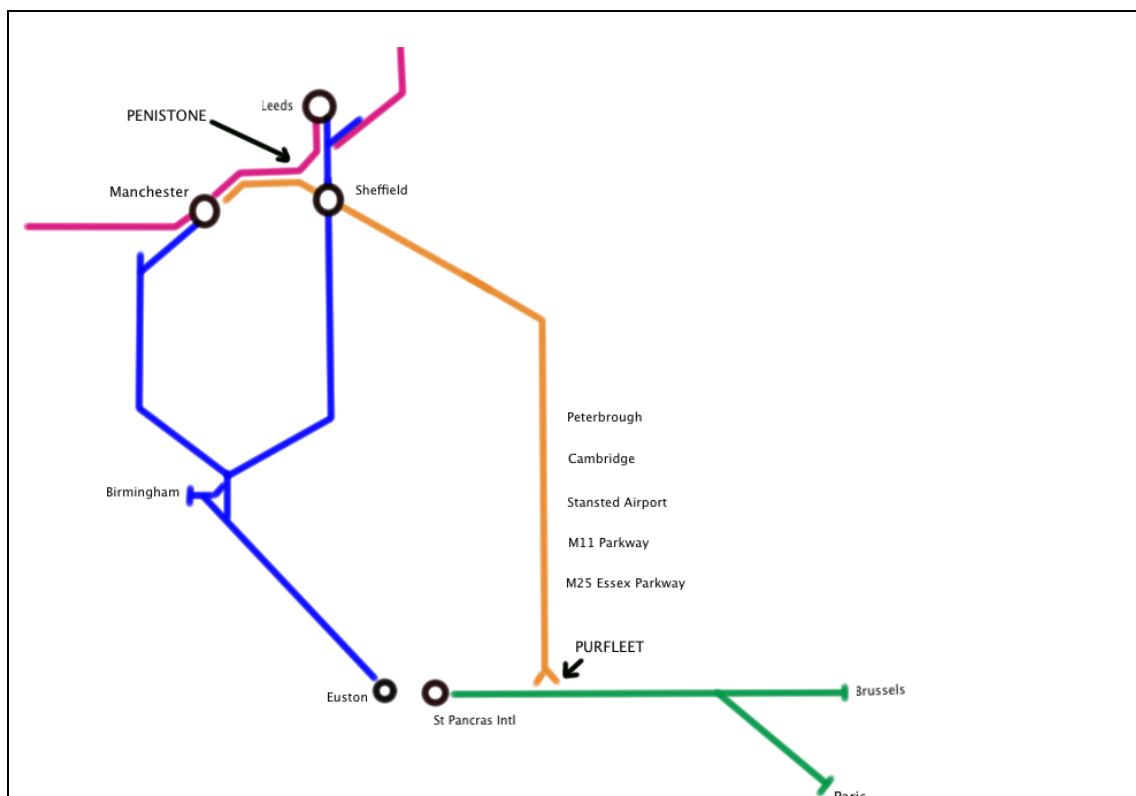
I had Sympathy for Richard Wright delivering the difficult pitch to a potentially sceptical audience but hope that something positive can come out of HS2 for our area.

And if HS2 does end up at Meadowhall I hope that the local business community can still work together and prove the figures wrong, now matter how they feel now.

If Meadowhall has all the shops and the main station, I hope it can become a new city centre for the region that complements the existing centre, rather than being seen by the powers-that-be as a malevolent force. They should adopt a plan B and approach future challenges with vision.

So what about HS4 then?..

Here it is on a map



# The main services using it

