

Further work on case for investment in North Wales rail infrastructure

The supplementary work which has been commissioned by the Welsh Government follows the publication of The Case for Investment by Professor Mark Barry which identified a vision and objectives for improvements to the North Wales Main Line and the Wrexham-Merseyside line following extensive engagement with stakeholders.

The interventions would widen access to employment across North Wales, Cheshire and Liverpool by improving rail services and enhancing rail connectivity from North Wales to international gateways at Manchester and Liverpool airports.

The next step is further development, refinement and assessment of the packages identified in the Case for Investment such as the modernisation of the North Wales Main Line from Holyhead to Crewe including line speed improvements, integration with HS2 at Crewe, increased frequencies, and park & ride and bus integration at several stations along the Wrexham-Merseyside borderlands line.

This will complement the work being done by the UK Government, who are responsible for funding and delivering rail enhancements in Wales, to develop enhancements across Wales following the cancellation of electrification to Swansea.

Ken Skates said:

“Development and delivery of an ambitious and equitable programme of rail infrastructure improvements in North Wales needs to happen at pace and this is a matter I have previously made very clear to the Secretary of State.

“Today’s announcement is another important step in the right direction and a good example of the action the Welsh Government is taking. The further development of cases for rail enhancements in North Wales will include identifying requirements, timescales, scope and costs for future outline business case developments and I am pleased that Transport for Wales will be carrying out this stage of work.

“North Wales’ connectivity with economic hubs across the border is becoming more and more important and this will only increase following Brexit.

“Reducing journey times, ensuring better access to airports and improving rail network resilience in North Wales to accommodate future demand are just some of the issues which will be considered as part of the next stage of work.

“We are determined to see a real step change in our rail infrastructure which is deliverable for the benefit of passengers. I urge the UK Government to get on board with our aspirations.”