

## SUMMARY

Our proposal for a LBIA Parkway Station on the existing Harrogate Line scored equal first with a proposed new rail link amongst the ten different rail options considered by the consultants. (Page 49 Section 8.2.2) However it was then dismissed at a late stage in the assessment process on the grounds that an "interchange" between the train and the shuttle bus to the Terminal was not recommended. In this paper we challenge several technical details in the assessment process and the scores allocated to each option. Furthermore the assessment takes no account of the very high capital cost of a new line with new stations and new rolling stock, compared with making use of the existing Harrogate Line services which only require a new station – and no new track or new rolling stock.

Likewise the assessment appears to ignore the fact that the existing Harrogate Line services are already fully resourced in terms of on-train and on-track staff, whereas the proposed new line would require new staff on the new trains and the new track and any new stations. Furthermore the Harrogate Line is on the Government short list for electrification, so it would seem logical to maximise the use of this investment which could provide a 15 minute frequency service between Leeds City Station and the Airport. The proposed new rail link with a 30 minute frequency would require new paths into Leeds Station and through Armley and Shipley Junctions which are currently not available.

The assessments challenged in this paper are summarised here and amplified in the Sections indicated.

- a) Harrogate Chamber has not been consulted by WSPPB during the preparation of their report despite being members of the Airport Consultative Committee and the Harrogate Line Rail Officers Group for over 12 years. Furthermore we initiated the proposals for the electrification of the Harrogate Line and we originally suggested a new Parkway Station on the existing line to serve the Airport in 2010. (See Section 2)
- b) The report rightly states that compared with other regional airports Leeds Bradford is the worst performing in terms of public transport accessibility and road access, and yet it has ranked relatively low in local priorities. We believe that these "local priorities" are in part influenced by political pressure in West Yorkshire and by commercial interests at the Airport. (Sections 3 & 4)
- c) The report quotes out of date figures for housing and employment land allocation in Harrogate District. A Government Planning Inspector has rejected the Councils' sites and policies development plan and said that much more housing and employment land should be allocated. Harrogate Borough Council is now undertaking a full review of the plan. There are several new proposals for housing developments and business parks around Harrogate and it appears very likely that some will be near the Harrogate railway line. (Section 5)
- d) The report makes repeated references to the low numbers of passengers using the existing inadequate Harrogate bus service, but then uses that flawed passenger data for projecting the potential usage of a rail link. It also ignores the potential demand from passengers along the railway line from York, Knaresborough and Harrogate who could travel to the Airport via LBIA Parkway Station, whereas the proposed new Rail Link would only serve Leeds. (Section 6)
- e) The report describes our proposal as "*LBIA Parkway Station – a new station on Harrogate Line close to Bramhope Tunnel (between Horsforth & Weeton) – Interchange from Leeds trains required.*" There are diagrams of nine other possible rail links but not one to illustrate how easily a LBIA Parkway Station could be connected to the Airport. It does not make any reference to the proximity of the Airport's Long Stay Car Park which already operates a frequent shuttle bus service to the Terminal. (Section 7)
- f) The assessment factor entitled "Funding Risks" is not equitably addressed such that the very low capital requirement for the proposed LBIA Parkway Station on an existing line is not fairly contrasted with the very high capital cost of the proposed new line from Leeds via Horsforth, Airport and Guiseley to Bradford. (Section 8)

- g) Furthermore the LBIA Parkway Scheme would incur negligible extra operating costs as it would use the existing train services, whilst all the other options will incur the full operating cost of extra trains and staff. Hence we challenge the scheme costs and the allocated scores in this Appraisal Framework. (Section 9)
- h) In the Appraisal Framework for rail schemes LBIA Parkway Station scores equal with a heavy rail link, (36 points), but we challenge the validity of several scores based on the criteria given. If all of these were revised to the higher scores which we propose, then the LBIA Parkway Station score would rise from the current 36 to a total of 44, making it by far the best scoring rail scheme. (Section 9)
- i) The Consultants then dismiss the LBIA Parkway proposal and favour a new heavy line from Leeds via Horsforth to the Airport and on to Guiseley and Bradford even though they have stated that such services could not be operated on the existing tracks due to path and platform constraints. This limitation on paths is a key reason why the proposed LBIA Parkway Station on the existing Harrogate line is a far better option than a new line, as it would allow a 15 min all day frequency with no increase in peak path requirements. (Section 10)
- j) The recently announced Virgin-Stagecoach East Coast franchise will operate seven trains a day each way between London and Harrogate via Leeds that will consume further track capacity. A bonus is that they could also stop at the proposed LBIA Parkway Station every two hours in each direction, if the new platform is built with sufficient length for IEP trains. (Section 11)
- k) The reports' estimates of Harrogate passenger demand are all based on the current 60 minute frequency of the Harrogate to Airport bus service No 747 and the 30 minute train frequency on the Harrogate Line. Usage would be much improved with the planned 15 minute frequency after electrification, as it is well known that with increasing frequency passenger numbers rise significantly, because waiting time is much lower. (Section 12)
- l) The report also adds that all rail revenues are less than costs. However for the LBIA Parkway we submit that this appraisal has again under-estimated the potential usage and over-estimated the costs. This confirms our view that this modelling should not be relied upon to assess the three rail schemes. The LBIA Parkway Station option would attract air passengers from all the stations on the line, whilst the additional operating costs would be much lower than forecast by the Consultants. (Section 13)
- m) The report states that provision of a station on the existing rail line between Leeds, Harrogate and York is seen as a potential short term delivery option to deliver rail access to the airport. It then refers to *longer term aspirations to deliver direct rail access, which this scheme could have a direct impact on, as it may take some of the demand, and therefore benefit, from any future scheme.* Why should a very expensive long term aspiration for a direct rail link to the Airport stop a low cost short-term solution for rail access to the Airport using an existing line near the Airport in conjunction with the existing long-stay car park shuttle bus? (Section 14.1)
- n) The report also highlights the potential of the proposed new rail links to promote park and ride into Leeds and yet it dismisses the benefits of park and ride at the proposed LBIA Parkway Station. The whole point of proposing a Parkway style station is to provide extensive car parking that can be used by residents of Arthington, Bramhope, Cookridge, Pool and Yeadon who work or shop in Leeds city centre, as detailed in our supporting papers. (Section 14.2)
- o) The assessment is inconsistent on the key issues of distribution and carbon emissions. The proposed LBIA Parkway Station will be far more effective than a direct Horsforth-Airport Link as it will operate at a higher frequency and also serve Harrogate, Knaresborough and York, as well as Leeds. Furthermore many other towns in Yorkshire could be served through frequent rail connections in Leeds and York. Hence it could be used by many more airline customers and airport employees than a rail link that only has a connection to Leeds. (Section 14.3)
- p) We submit that in view of the admitted weaknesses in the modelling and the flawed data source for Harrogate passengers, there is no justification for dismissing the LBIA Parkway Scheme at this late stage simply because the so-called "interchange" is not popular. It would in fact be no different to a family parking their car and then waiting for the Airport Shuttle Bus to take them to the Terminal. (Section 15)
- q) The very high capital and operating cost of the suggested heavy rail links should have redirected the study towards further consideration of the very much lower cost LBIA Parkway

Station Scheme, which would use the existing long-stay car park shuttle buses already running within half a mile of the proposed station location. A similar rail + shuttle bus scheme is already in operation at several other UK Airports such as Bristol, Cardiff, East Midlands, Edinburgh Glasgow, Liverpool and Luton. (Section 15)

- r) In their final recommendations, the Consultants recommended just two alternative schemes:  
**Short/Medium Term** - A65 to Leeds Bradford International Airport Link Road - WE AGREE!  
**Long Term** - Heavy Rail (Guiseley - LBIA - Horsforth) - WE STRONGLY DISAGREE!  
It is very surprising that, without further explanation, our proposals for an LBIA Parkway Station are at this stage simply dropped from the review of options.
- s) We do not dispute the short/medium term recommendation for a new Airport Link Road from the A65, but we strongly object to the recommended long term heavy rail link from Guiseley to LBIA to Horsforth, and the omission of the proposed LBIA Parkway Station which is an easily achievable solution at a much lower cost. The report correctly states that the highway and rail options should not be seen as mutually exclusive as they deliver a different set of benefits.  
**Therefore we submit that the LBIA Parkway Station proposal should be taken forward for detailed design and evaluation alongside the above two options. (Section 15)**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the investigation of options for upgrading train services on the Harrogate Line between Leeds, Harrogate and York, Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce proposed a new station be constructed at the southern portal of Bramhope Tunnel, approximately 1 mile north of Horsforth station.

The station would function as a joint Airport and Park & Ride facility achieving two key objectives:-

- a) Provide frequent direct rail access to the Airport from Leeds, Harrogate and York centres, thereby serving both West and North Yorkshire more effectively than current bus services.
- b) Provide much needed accessibility and car parking capacity for new rail users in the surrounding areas of Arthington, Bramhope, Cookridge, Pool and Yeadon, thereby enabling the rail route to fulfil a much more valuable role in the North Leeds area it serves.

It was proposed that the existing Airport car park shuttle bus be extended by half a mile to the new railway station to fully integrate accessibility between the station and the Airport terminal. All local services would call at the station. If rail-airport traffic were to become significant, the potential use of automated people-mover solutions could be explored, as used at Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

This proposal achieves significantly improved use of an existing physical asset (the Harrogate Line) which already runs within striking distance of the Airport. It is important to note that this scheme uses both existing infrastructure and resources to enable a cost effective link in short timescales. Requiring a relatively small capital cost and with marginal subsequent operational expenditure costs, it importantly addresses the above two key objectives with unparalleled value for the use of public funds.

This proposal was one of the various options considered by the consultants WSP and Parsons Brinkerhoff (WSPPB) whose report was issued by the Dept for Transport on 9th December 2014 as the LEEDS BRADFORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CONNECTIVITY STUDY- Option Assessment Report.

The Consultants recommended the following two schemes:

- *A65 – LBIA Link Road, with improvements to bus services to Leeds and Bradford (Table 39)*
- *New rail link between Leeds, Bradford and LBIA via Guiseley and Horsforth. (Table 40)*

Our LBIA Parkway Station proposal on the existing Harrogate Line scored equal first with the proposed new rail link amongst the ten different rail options considered by the consultants. (Page 49 Section 8.2.2) However it was then dismissed at a later stage in the assessment process on the grounds that an interchange between a train and a shuttle bus to the Terminal was not recommended to be progressed, even though it would be very similar to the transfer from the Car Park to the Terminal.

In this paper we challenge several technical details in the assessment process and the scores allocated to each option. Furthermore the assessment takes no account of the very high capital cost of a new line with new stations and new rolling stock, compared with making use of the existing Harrogate Line services which only require a new station – and no new track or new rolling stock.

*(Note: Direct extracts from the Consultants' Report are shown in italics.)*

## 2. LACK OF CONSULTATION

Harrogate Chamber has not been consulted by WSPPB during the preparation of their report despite being long-standing members of the Airport Consultative Committee and the Harrogate Line Rail Officers Group for over 12 years. Furthermore we initiated the proposals for electrification of the Harrogate Line and we originally suggested a new Parkway Station on the existing line to serve the Airport in 2010. The proposal was reiterated in numerous subsequent reports and presentations. However the Chamber was not included in the Consultants' Stakeholder Reference Group listed on page 7, Section 1.3, or included in the "public consultation" referred to in page 9, Fig 3, Work Flow.

In March 2014 the Dept for Transport appointed consultants to undertake a feasibility study into improving connectivity to Leeds Bradford Airport, but we were not informed who they were and they did not make contact with Harrogate Chamber. We therefore prepared a more detailed paper proposing the Parkway Station (HT470) and we asked our MP Andrew Jones to submit it to the Transport Minister Robert Goodwill MP following his visit to the Airport in August 2014. Baroness Kramer, Minister of State, responded to Andrew Jones on 17<sup>th</sup> September, confirming that a new station on the existing Harrogate Line was one of the options short-listed for further testing in the final stage of the study and as such is receiving full consideration alongside other short-listed options.

*She added that "the consultants carrying out the study have talked to a wide range of stakeholders about their ideas for improving connectivity to LBIA and I am told they are well aware of the proposals put forward by the Harrogate Chamber. However I will ask officials to make sure they receive the document... so they are familiar with all the points raised."*

We responded that it would be helpful to know who the Consultants doing this work were so that we could provide them with our supporting evidence for the LBIA Parkway Scheme. Our MP's Caseworker spoke to Baroness Kramer's office about putting us in touch with the consultants. They asked us in the first instance to contact one of the lead officials in the Department for Transport – Margaret Jackson, Team Leader, Northern Engagement Team, Cities Policy and Delivery, Local Transport Directorate, Department for Transport in Leeds. We duly contacted Ms Jackson and explained that we wished to ensure that our detailed work on the benefits of a Leeds Bradford Airport Parkway Station on the existing Harrogate Rail Line was brought to the attention of all the members, staff and consultants involved in the LBIA Connectivity Study Group. There was still no direct contact with the Consultants.

We therefore sent to Ms Jackson three documents prepared by our Rail Adviser Mark Leving, the former Managing Director of First Hull Trains, who first recognised the potential for more direct trains between Harrogate and London Kings Cross, namely

1. HT470 LBIA Parkway proposals
2. HT471 Aerial photograph showing location
3. HT472 Potential benefits for Leeds City Region towns

We said would be happy to answer questions by e-mail or to put the DfT and the Consultants in direct contact with Mark Leving. We said it was very important that the Airport should benefit from the expected investment in the electrification of the existing Harrogate Rail Line which runs so close to the Airport runway. We asked to be advised how and when we could help the Study Group assimilate this option. We were not informed whom the Consultants were and they never made any contact with us.

Our three documents were not included in the review of previous studies listed on page 12 Section 3.2 and so it is not surprising that the final WSPPB Report does not do justice to our proposals.

## 3. LOCAL PRIORITIES

The Consultants report rightly states on page 16, Fig 5, that *when compared to other regional airports in this part of the UK, Leeds Bradford is the worst performing in terms of public transport accessibility and road access*, as shown in Figure 6 on page 17.

*The report adds: The need to connect LBIA into the railway network is identified in a number of previous study documents and evidence suggests that direct and reliable rail services maximise rail mode share and this is consistent with findings from across the world.*

*Deliverability of a rail link from the Airport into the existing rail network is challenging and existing studies have shown a relatively lower impact in the context of competing local priorities.*

## **COMMENTS:**

We believe that these "local priorities" are in part influenced by political and commercial interests. For example we have heard Councillors from Bradford objecting to any proposals for rail investment in North Yorkshire and hence dismissing our scheme for a new Station on the existing line in favour of a new direct line to the Airport, regardless of the tremendous difference in cost and feasibility.

## **4. AIRPORT MANAGEMENT ATTITUDE**

We have had several meetings with members of the LBIA Airport Management and made presentations to the Airport's Consultative Committee and the Airport Transport Forum. We have provided them with all the arguments in favour of this project and quantified the potential journey time savings and extra opportunities to reach the Airport from all over North and West Yorkshire.

Regrettably there has been no support from LBIA Management for the proposed electrification of the Harrogate Line with a new Station to serve the Airport, although the Consultative Committee liked it.

This is despite our repeated proposals and displays of maps and aerial photographs to show how an Airport Parkway Station could be easily built around the southern portal of the Bramhope Tunnel. This could even be made long enough to allow the East Coast London-Harrogate Trains to pick-up and drop-off passengers, as well as the proposed 15 minute frequency local electric trains.

This Parkway Station would serve not only Airport Passengers from North, West and South Yorkshire, but also commuters from Arthington, Bramhope, Cookridge, Pool and Yeadon who currently have no opportunity to "park and rail" into Leeds. Horsforth Station Car Park is hopelessly too small.

## **COMMENTS:**

We suggested that the Airport Management could even operate the whole of the parking arrangements to ensure no loss of airport parking revenue!! They were not interested. We now wonder whether their dependence on car parking revenue is influencing their attitude towards other forms of surface access, especially the proposed new Link Road from the A65 to the Airport which will make it easier for private motorists to reach the Airport and hence fill their rather expensive car parks!

## **5. PROJECTED GROWTH IN HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT**

Section 4.3 on page 19 refers to the Harrogate Borough Council's adopted Core Strategy 2009 which limits housing growth to 390 houses per year from 2004 to 2023, with no major settlements planned within 10km of LBIA

Likewise Section 4.9 on page 21 reports that the anticipated provision of 45 ha employment land up to 2021 can be achieved through the development of land with existing planning permissions, plus the allocation of new development land concentrated in Ripon and Knaresborough.

## **COMMENTS:**

These limits on housing and employment land allocation have recently been found to be unsound by a Government Planning Inspector, who has rejected the Councils' sites and policies development plan document based on these low figures. The Inspector said that much more housing and employment land should be allocated and Harrogate Borough Council is now undertaking a full review of the plan.

There have been several new proposals for housing developments and business parks around Harrogate and it appears likely that some will be near the Harrogate railway line.

## **6. EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Section 5.1.7 on page 27 the report states correctly "*As is well documented, there is no rail or tram link to the airport.*" However it ought perhaps to have added that there is a well used local rail line only 1 mile from the Airport Terminal building, but this obvious option has been repeatedly ignored.

The report adds "*It has been demonstrated in the evidence base that currently, the interchange facilities at the nearest rail stations provide a poor alternative to the private car.*" In fact the nearest station at Horsforth has only a very small car park which is filled very early each morning. We have previously suggested operating a shuttle bus between Horsforth Station and the Airport. The Airport Management made an enquiry to METRO and then said it would be too expensive to operate such a service, although other operators were willing to offer lower prices.

The report goes on to state "Express bus services from Leeds City Centre have recently been improved although Bradford City Centre is not served by a direct express service to the Airport" – ignoring the fact that there are two regular local bus services between Bradford Centre and the Airport via different routes offering a combined 30 minute frequency. These buses pick up passengers along the route.

Harrogate is connected by bus – although it is only at a 60 minute frequency which is considered too long for air passengers to wait on arrival! The adult fares are currently £5 single or £8 return.

Bus services direct to York ceased operation in 2009 due to lack of demand, but York could be served via the Harrogate Rail line if the suggested shuttle bus to Horsforth was implemented or a new LBIA Parkway Station was constructed as we proposed.

#### **COMMENTS:**

The report makes repeated references to the low numbers of passengers using the existing Harrogate bus service and it under-estimates the fare payable between Harrogate and the Airport. Then it uses that flawed passenger data for projecting the potential usage and revenue of a direct rail link. It also ignores the potential demand from passengers along the route from York, Knaresborough and Harrogate to the Airport who would be able to use the proposed LBIA Parkway Station, especially if it operates at the proposed higher frequency – every 15mins from Harrogate and 30mins from York.

### **7. POTENTIAL RAIL SCHEMES**

Table 3 on page 29 lists 10 alternative rail schemes of which the last is described as "LBIA Parkway Station – a new station on Harrogate Line close to Bramhope Tunnel (between Horsforth & Weeton) – Interchange from Leeds trains required." However it does not make any reference to the proximity of the Airport's Long Stay Car Park which already operates a frequent shuttle bus service to the Terminal.

In the longer term it would also be possible to operate an automated people-mover as used at several UK airports. Figure 10 on page 32 does show the proximity of the proposed LBIA Parkway Station to the Airport but no connection is shown. The location would also be very close to the proposed new Link Road, which, if and when it is built, could easily incorporate a road to a new Parkway Station.

#### **COMMENT:**

It is regrettable that the series of diagrams of the nine other possible rail links on pages 32-34, Figs 11-21 does not include one to illustrate how easily a LBIA Parkway Station could be connected to the Airport, even though we provided a detailed map and an aerial photograph to make this point clear.

### **8. APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK – Capital Costs**

Table 5 in Section 7.2 on page 36 identifies four key assessment areas, each with several related sub-criteria against which each of the identified schemes were assessed under four main headings: Economy & Growth, Environmental; Accessibility & Well Being; Scheme Acceptability & Funding Risks.

We have no dispute with these headings but the final point "Funding Risks" is not equitably addressed in the following sub-headings or in the final report. Hence the very low capital requirement for our proposed LBIA Parkway Station on an existing line is not fairly contrasted with the very high capital cost of the proposed new line from Leeds via Horsforth, Airport and Guiseley to Bradford.

For example in the Appraisal Framework for Rail Schemes Table 25 on page 44, the LBIA Parkway is listed as costing £10m - £50m, whilst the proposed new lines including a new station are mostly listed as greater than £100m as follows – although it does not state how much greater than £100m!

*Scheme J: LBIA Parkway Station - Scheme cost = £10m-£50m (A significant over-estimate?)*

*Scheme N: Rail Option 1: Horsforth to LBIA (interchange) = £50-£100m*

*Scheme T: Rail Option 1a: Leeds to Horsforth to LBIA = £50-£100m*

*Scheme AB: Rail Option 2: Guiseley to LBIA (interchange) = >£100m*

*Scheme I: Rail Option 3: Guiseley to LBIA to Horsforth (interchange) = >£100m*

*Scheme X: Rail Option 4: Leeds to Guiseley to LBIA = >£100m*

*Scheme Y: Rail Option 5: Bradford Foster Square to Guiseley to LBIA = >£100m*

*Scheme W: Rail Option 6: Leeds and Bradford Foster Square to Guiseley to LBIA = >£100m*

*Scheme AH: Rail Option 7: Calverley to LBIA = >£100m*

*(This summary table excludes the proposed Tram-Train links which are all over £100m)*

## **COMMENTS:**

We would question the basis of these Scheme Costs which we believe seriously under estimate the current cost of new track, signalling and stations. For example, Rail Option 3 listed as costing >£100m is a combination of Options 1 and 2 which are listed as costing >£100m + £50-£100m respectively.

Furthermore the LBIA Parkway Scheme incurs negligible extra operating costs as it uses the existing train services whilst all the other options will incur the full operating cost of extra trains and staff.

Hence we challenge the scheme costs and the allocated scores in this Appraisal Framework.

## **9. APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK – Rail Scheme Scoring**

Figure 26 on page 45 summarises the allocated scores for each of the twelve rail options, with the LBIA Parkway Station Scheme being ranked equal first scoring 36 points the same as Rail Option 3, Guiseley to LBIA to Horsforth. We believe that again the LBIA Parkway Station option has been under-valued on the following factors for the reasons stated:

**A) Connecting People to LBIA (Providing greater coverage of population).** Why is the Parkway Scheme only allocated 5 points when it connects not only Leeds, Burley Park, Headingley and Horsforth but also Harrogate, Knaresborough, York and intermediate Stations plus many connections at York? Option 1a, the proposed direct service between Leeds and LBIA is allocated 10 points when it will only service Leeds, Burley Park, Headingley and Horsforth.

**G) Impact on areas of Environmental Significance.** Why is the LBIA Parkway Scheme allocated a score minus one when it should have no impact on the local environment because the line and the train service already exist? The proposed new line from Horsforth to LBIA would have a significant effect – and yet it has the same score. The Parkway Scheme should be neutral with a score zero.

**I) Active Travel.** Why is the LBIA Parkway Scheme allocated zero for neutral when the proposed new services to Horsforth are allocated plus 1 for moderate improvement in pedestrian/cycle facilities?

**K) Road Safety.** Likewise, why is the LBIA Parkway Scheme allocated a score of 1 when the proposed new line from Horsforth to LBIA is allocated 2 – and yet it would have very similar usage?

If all of the above elements were revised to the suggested higher scores then the LBIA Parkway Station score would rise from the current 36 to a total of 44, making it by far the best scoring rail scheme – without taking account of the relative capital or operating costs.

Subsequently Section 8.2 on page 48 states that through discussions with stakeholders, and following the outline appraisal of the schemes, a number of short / medium-term measures have come forward from the sifting process as detailed above.

Section 8.2.2 on page 49 stated that two short/medium-term Rail/Light Rail schemes had been prioritised for further assessment as follows.

*For the short / medium term rail schemes, LBIA Parkway Station scores the highest number of points in the Appraisal Framework (with 36 points). It is a significant infrastructure scheme on its own and is therefore identified for further appraisal as an isolated scheme.*

*Placed next in the for the short / medium term rail schemes is Rail Option 1 – Horsforth to LBIA (with 35 points). As there is no clear difference in the score (just 1 point) between Parkway Station, this scheme has also been prioritised for further appraisal as an isolated scheme.*

*No other rail schemes were identified in the long list falling into the short / medium term category.*

Section 8.3.2 on page 53 stated that just one longer-term Rail/Light Rail scheme had been prioritised for further assessment, namely *Rail Option 3 – Guiseley-LBIA-Horsforth (Interchange) (36 points)*.

*This scheme scores 36 in the Appraisal Framework with a marked difference between the next highest scoring long term rail scheme (scoring 31 or less). Therefore no other long term rail schemes were prioritised for further appraisal.*

## **COMMENTS:**

For the short / medium term rail schemes, LBIA Parkway Station scores the highest number of points in the Appraisal Framework (with 36 points). If all of the above elements were revised to the higher scores suggested above then the LBIA Parkway Station score would rise from the current 36 to a total

of 44, making it by far the best scoring rail scheme – without taking account of the relative capital or operating costs, which are much lower than all the other rail schemes considered.

The report then states on page 49 that it is a significant infrastructure scheme on its own and is therefore identified for further appraisal as an isolated scheme. The precise details of this “further appraisal” are not published in the report – only the outcome as follows. May we ask why not?

## 10. OPTION ASSESSMENT - RAIL

Section 9 on page 53 lists the best performing Schemes that were then short-listed for further appraisal, taking into account a multi criteria approach.

### Table 9 - Short/Medium Term

- *Heavy Rail - Horsforth to LBIA – interchange at Horsforth (New branch from Leeds to Harrogate rail line, extending out from Horsforth to LBIA. Interchange currently required at Horsforth. The branch could be operated as light or heavy rail.)*
- *LBIA Parkway Station (Harrogate Line) New station on Harrogate Line close to Bramhope Tunnel (between Horsforth & Weeton). Would require linking to airport via shuttle bus.*

### Table 10 - Long Term

- *Heavy Rail - Guiseley-LBIA-Horsforth - new rail line providing a connection between the Bradford - Ilkley line at Guiseley and the Leeds – Harrogate – York line at Horsforth with an intermediate stop at LBIA (interchange currently required at Guiseley and Horsforth).*

The report notes that *the rail schemes are both being tested as a separate service because of identified constraints on the existing main lines to Leeds and Bradford, linked to track capacity at Shipley and Armley Junction, and platform capacity at Leeds Station, meaning that through services could not currently be accommodated. Infrastructure would be in place to link with mainline for servicing, etc. but the link trains between Guiseley & Horsforth would operate separately as a shuttle service.*

### Track paths

This is a very important issue because of the need to secure paths for any proposed new train services that allow for all the existing commitments on the line. Hence direct services between Leeds City Station and the Airport could not be operated unless someone funds and builds extra track and platform capacity, in addition to the cost of the airport line itself.

The report correctly points out in Section 10 on page 63 that *discussions with Network Rail, and previous work by WSP on the Leeds – Harrogate – York Rail Line have identified existing constraints which would prevent additional through services operating at present, including single track sections on the Harrogate Line, junction and line capacity on the approach between Armley Junction and Leeds Station, platform capacity at Leeds Station (particularly for terminating services), and track capacity at Shipley Junction. Some, if not all of these constraints, would need to be resolved before additional and/or through services could operate, and the cost of any solutions has not been considered as part of this study.*

### COMMENTS:

This limitation on paths is a key reason why the proposed LBIA Parkway Station on the existing Harrogate line is a far better option than a new line, as it would allow a 15 min all day frequency with no increase in peak path requirements.

There is also the prospect that the recently announced new Virgin-Stagecoach East Coast franchise will operate seven trains a day each way between London and Harrogate via Leeds which will consume further track capacity. A bonus is that they could also stop at the proposed LBIA Parkway Station every two hours in each direction, if the new platform is built with a suitable length for IEP trains.

Therefore we cannot understand why the Consultants dismiss the LBIA Parkway proposal out of hand and favour a new heavy line from Leeds via Horsforth to the Airport and on to Guiseley and Bradford when they have stated that such services could not be operated on the existing tracks!!



## 11. MODELLING ASSUMPTIONS

Section 10.3 on page 63 states that for the LBIA Parkway Station, the core test assumes a new station on the Harrogate line close to Bramhope Tunnel (between Horsforth and Weeton) with a shuttle bus service linking to the airport. This is currently assumed to be an extension of the existing car park shuttle bus. A 5 minute interchange time has been assumed. Sensitivity tests with 10 minute interchange and in-vehicle time factors have also been carried out.

In Table 13 on page 66, the modelling assumptions for demand are based on the 2014 Bus Patronage Data for Leeds Centre to LBIA and for Harrogate Centre to LBIA. However this is misleading because the current numbers of passengers on the Harrogate to Airport 747 bus service are very low. We know that this is because many Harrogate air passengers will not wait for an hourly service either on departure or on return, preferring to take a taxi or drive their own car and park at the Airport. It is well known that a higher frequency service will attract more passengers on such a service.

Table 13 also gives these assumptions for planned service frequency compared with the current base:

- Leeds Centre to LBIA Base: 20 mins. Scheme: 30 mins.
- Harrogate Centre to LBIA Base: 60 mins. Scheme: 30 mins.

However these figures make no allowance for the planned 15 minute frequency service between Leeds City Station and the new LBIA Parkway Station following the expected electrification of the line.

Also in Table 13 it assumes an opening year of 2021, when it should be possible to open in 2019 if the electrification of the Harrogate Line is completed as expected following the Trans-Pennine Line.

In Table 14 on page 67, the estimated capital and operating costs the short-listed rail options are compared as follows:

<b>Scheme details</b>	<b>Capital Costs</b>	<b>Operating/Maintenance Costs</b>
LBIA Parkway Station (Harrogate Line)	£7,784,000	£161,000 per year
Short Term - Heavy Rail Horsforth LBIA (Interchange at Horsforth)	£70,230,000	£590,000 per year
Long Term - Heavy Rail Guiseley – LBIA – Horsforth	£168,220,000	£1,360,000 per year

*Note: The LBIA Parkway Station Costs based on consultants estimates using costs for a similar size station. Validated against current WYCA estimates. Provision of station only (no additional services) with associated infrastructure (parking and access). Includes 44% OB.*

*The two heavy rail options Costs based on AECOM review of proposed scheme to LBIA. Light rail costs scaled for heavy rail estimates. Assuming electrified track and airport station with 30 minute service headway. Includes 66% OB.*

### COMMENTS:

These estimates show that a new LBIA Parkway Station would only cost about 11% of the cost of a new rail link between Horsforth and the Airport with only 27% of the operating and maintenance costs.

The proposed heavy rail link Guiseley – LBIA – Horsforth is estimated to cost more than 21 times the cost of a Parkway Station, whilst the operating costs would be more than 8 times greater.

These figures substantiate our view that building the proposed LBIA Parkway Station on the existing line is the most cost-effective way to provide a rail link to the Airport. Furthermore it will provide a higher frequency service every 15 minutes between Leeds and Harrogate when the line is electrified.

We would challenge the estimated operating costs for the LBIA Parkway Station as it will use existing trains and staff, unlike the suggested direct rail links to the Airport which need extra trains and staff.

## 12. APPRAISAL RESULTS

Tables 19, 20 & 21 on pages 73-75 tabulate the appraisal results in terms of the core and sensitivity tests for each of the three short-listed rail options. For each option the comments are the same namely the core test implies poor value for money and revenues do not exceed costs. However these comments are based on the current passenger numbers on the existing once an hour Harrogate-Airport bus service taken in the first half of the year, which we submit bear no relation to the potential demand if a 15 minute electrified service was operating to LBIA Parkway Station as we proposed.

The same comments apply to the modelled generalised cost component parts for each of the core schemes shown in Figures 37 to 43 on pages 78 to 83.

At the end of Section 10.5, the report comments: *In practice, as the Harrogate rail connection is unlikely to be delivered initially through direct connectivity, a further sensitivity test has been undertaken with a five minute interchange. Because of the relative demand from Harrogate, the impact was not significant, and did not change the overall BCR for the scheme. More detailed assessment of the potential costs of providing any direct service from Harrogate would be required, as this has not yet been assessed by any of the scheme promoters, or included in the economic appraisal.*

This adverse comment appears to overlook the fact that the LBIA Parkway Scheme would provide the desired connectivity to Harrogate – with an easy transfer to and from the Terminal Building using the existing long-stay car park shuttle buses – just the same as air passengers who drive and park.

In Section 10.8 on page 87, the summary of the public transport appraisal for rail options is as follows:

*The Heavy Rail – Horsforth to LBIA (short / medium term) generates the highest indicative BCR (0.3).*

*The Heavy Rail – Guiseley – LBIA - Horsforth (long term) generates an indicative BCR of similar scale, but marginally lower (0.2).*

*The Parkway Station indicative BCR performs worst (0.0), due to the higher proportion of wait time and interchange penalty.*

*In the Sensitivity Test, assuming a 10 minute interchange penalty significantly reduces the benefits; and including an in-vehicle time factor significantly increase the benefits, approximately doubling the benefits for the Heavy Rail – Horsforth to LBIA (short / medium term) and Heavy Rail – Horsforth to LBIA (long term) but both still imply poor VfM.*

In the summary conclusions on page 88, the report states “Demand and fares were not tested, however the following conclusions have been drawn based on the benchmarking exercise undertaken:

□ *Demand – The demand used for the study represented passengers boarding over the period December 2013 to June 2014 (data supplied by the current operator, Yorkshire Tiger). Demand representing a smaller sample was later provided by WYCA as a means of benchmarking. The outcome was that the study demand might be under-represented to a certain extent, highlighting a degree of uncertainty in the modelling, but also bearing in mind the scope of data captured in the two data sets.*

*Further to this, one of the model limitations is that it captures the demand impacts only between the locations modelled (i.e. between the locations of Leeds, Bradford, Harrogate, and the LBIA) and not intermediate trips. The impacts on passengers not accessing LBIA, but still using the schemes are not captured, and this has a potential to improve the economic performance and BCR.*

### COMMENTS:

These conclusions are all based on the current 60 minute frequency of the Harrogate to Airport bus service No 747 and the 30 minute train frequency on the Harrogate Line which would be much improved with the planned 15 minute frequency after electrification. It is well known in rail forecasting that increasing frequency increases passenger numbers significantly, when waiting time is shorter.

The Report also adds that all rail revenues are less than costs. However for the LBIA Parkway we submit that this appraisal has again under-estimated the potential usage and over-estimated the costs.

This confirms our view that the modelling should not be relied upon to assess the three rail schemes. The LBIA Parkway Station option would attract air passengers from all the stations on the line whilst the additional operating costs would be much lower than forecast by the Consultants.

### 13. STUDY CONCLUSIONS BY WSPPB

From the modelling and appraisal undertaken across the range of short-listed public transport and highway schemes, the following conclusions for rail have been drawn in Section 12.1 on page 129:

*The core assumption tests imply low and poor value for money (VfM) for the rail options, with the Guiseley – LBIA – Horsforth option being the best performing. Whilst it produces a marginally lower BCR than other rail options because of the high capital cost, it provides far greater connectivity and accessibility benefits so provides a better overall Value for Money outcome and impact on objectives.*

The sensitivity tests results are summarised as follows:

- The assessment of options involving interchange (i.e. the parkway station and a self-contained rail shuttle involving interchange at Horsforth and/or Guiseley) do not give a positive economic assessment and are not recommended to be progressed;*
- Options with a through service give a positive but poor economic assessment indicating such schemes perform better than those requiring interchange but offer poor value for money;*
- Through services could only be delivered if existing network constraints around Shipley and Leeds were addressed and the line to Harrogate electrified (because of time and traction limitations) – the assessment assumes that these are provided as future network upgrades and are not included in the core scheme cost;*
- Including an in-vehicle time factor to reflect a preference for rail over bus travel significantly increases the benefit of rail options but not to a level where high value for money is likely;*
- Rail patronage is difficult to estimate where there is no existing demand, and as the approach taken does not factor in demand between intermediate stations, or from intermediate stations to/from the airport, the total demand may currently be understated; and*
- For the rail options to offer high value for money, patronage would need to be around 5 times that currently being forecast in the study. The current forecast for the through rail scheme between Leeds and Bradford (Guiseley to Horsforth link) is for around 121,000 passengers at opening year, which equates to around half the current public transport demand to and from the airport.*
- The forecast operating and maintenance cost for the Core Scheme is approx. £1.360m per annum. This would therefore require 593,886 passengers per annum at the assumed average fare (this equates to a 10% mode split by rail at an overall 6m airport passengers – the 2030 Forecast figure) to cover operating costs. This is clearly a significant challenge and would be impacted upon if airport patronage did not increase at the predicted level.*

In Section 12.2 an initial Option Assessment Framework summarising the scheme impacts and benefits is included in tables 34, 35 & 36 on pages 134-139 for each of the three short-listed rail options. This was intended to demonstrate the logic underpinning the reason for selecting schemes taken forward for further assessment and capturing impacts in addition to the assessment of BCR. The report states that: *Conclusions are based on a combination of the economic performance of the scheme, but also an assessment of delivery against the project objectives and other non-monetised impacts, with particular reference to improving airport connectivity and contributing towards growth at the airport*

#### COMMENT

We submit that in view of the admitted weaknesses in the modelling and the flawed data source for Harrogate passengers, there is no justification for dismissing the LBIA Parkway Scheme at this late stage simply because the so-called “interchange” is not popular. It would in fact be no different to the passengers parking their car and then waiting for the Airport Shuttle Bus to take them to the Terminal.

The very high capital and operating cost of the suggested heavy rail links should have redirected the study towards further consideration of the very much lower cost LBIA Parkway Station Scheme, which would use the existing long-stay car park shuttle buses already running within half a mile of the proposed station location. A similar rail + shuttle bus scheme is already in operation at other UK Airports such as Bristol, Cardiff, East Midlands, Edinburgh Glasgow, Liverpool and Luton

In the longer term if demand increases sufficiently to justify the investment, an automated rail-based shuttle service could be built between the LBIA Parkway Station and the Terminal Building, similar to the air-link shuttle at Birmingham Airport, the North-South Terminal shuttle at Gatwick Airport and the Heathrow Terminal 5 concourse shuttle.

## 14. OPTION ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

In Section 12.2 on page 131, the report includes "an initial Option Assessment Framework summarising the scheme impacts and benefits is included in the following tables for each appraised option. This is intended to demonstrate the logic underpinning the reason for selecting schemes taken forward for further assessment and capturing impacts in addition to the assessment of BCR."

It states "Conclusions are based on a combination of the economic performance of the scheme, but also an assessment of delivery against the project objectives and other non-monetised impacts, with particular reference to improving airport connectivity and contributing towards growth at the airport."

There are several inconsistencies between the three tables 34, 35 and 36 summarising the Consultants' assessment of the three short-listed rail schemes. We have only highlighted those which adversely affect the conclusions on the proposed LBIA Parkway Station (Table 35 page 136).

### 14.1 Assessment Factor: Strategic Fit

Tables 34, 35 & 36 on pages 134, 136 & 138 all include the following three paragraphs on strategic fit: *The LBIA Surface Access Strategy (SAS) document outlines the issues and proposals to improve connectivity to LBIA from Leeds, Bradford, Harrogate and York.*

*The SAS accepts that improvements in access are required and highlights the provision of a new direct road link from the A65 and a new fixed rail link, currently being investigated as part of a review of the Harrogate line, as examples of schemes that would better support growth and improve connectivity.*

*The introduction of rail connectivity to the airport currently exists as a potential scheme in the West Yorkshire (Plus) Transport Fund. The transformational schemes that have been identified for further development and investment at a City region level include rail or tram train connections between Leeds and Bradford to Leeds Bradford International Airport.*

Table 35 on page 136 on the LBIA Parkway Station scheme also includes the following very significant paragraph – see the sentence underlined:-

*The provision of a station on the existing rail line between Leeds, Harrogate and York, which is the closest current rail line to the airport, is seen as a potential short term delivery option to deliver rail access to the airport. Reference should be made however to longer term aspirations to deliver direct rail access which this scheme could have a direct impact on, as it may take some of the demand, and therefore benefit, from any future scheme.*

### COMMENT:

Why should a very expensive long term aspiration for a direct rail link to the Airport stop a low cost short-term solution to deliver rail access to the Airport using an existing line near the Airport?

### 14.2 Assessment Factors: Local Environment & Delivery

#### **Table 34 pages 134-135 Rail Link between Horsforth and LBIA – through services assumed:**

**Local Environment:** *This scheme would require significant infrastructure and civil engineering works to construct the link between Horsforth and the airport. As the airport is situated in an elevated position from the main railway, even if taking gradients into consideration, it is expected that earthworks to create a cutting would be required at the Horsforth end. As the area is predominantly greenfield land, this would have a detrimental impact.*

**Delivery:** *There is a degree of concern locally over the potential environmental and quality of life impacts the rail link could have, which will need to be mitigated against during the design and consultation process. There could be significant local resident opposition to the rail scheme, particularly amongst those directly affected, and there are significant engineering constraints that need to be overcome due to the topography of the area.*

#### **Table 35 page 136-137 Parkway Station on the Leeds – Harrogate – York Rail Line:**

**Local Environment:** *This scheme will require additional land take to provide the station and thus have a slight adverse impact on the local environment. There will be an additional requirement for land to provide supporting infrastructure, including the car park and highway access.*

*The station would be located in a rural environment and would therefore need to be sympathetically designed. It is understood there may be restrictions on some of the rail infrastructure due to listed status of the cutting retaining wall designs on the approach to the Bramhope Tunnel southern entrance.*

**Delivery:** There are a number of significant constraints that would need to be addressed, as the station location is in a deep cutting on the approach to a tunnel. It is understood the cutting wall abutments are listed structures and may preclude major construction. This would need further investigation, along with practical access to the station, and a suitable route between the airport and station, as this is not currently public highway.

**Table 36 pages 138-139 Rail Link from Guiseley via LBIA to Horsforth – through services:**

**Local Environment:** This scheme would require significant infrastructure and civil engineering works to construct the link between Horsforth and the airport, and between Guiseley and the airport. As the airport is situated in an elevated position from the main railway, even if taking gradients into consideration, it is expected that earthworks to create a cutting would be required at the Horsforth end with significant, if not greater, constraints in constructing the link towards Guiseley because of housing and commercial property. As the area surrounding any development is predominantly greenfield land, this would have a detrimental impact.

**Delivery:** There is a degree of concern locally over the potential environmental and quality of life impacts the rail link could have, which will need to be mitigated against during the design and consultation process. There could be significant local resident opposition to the road scheme, particularly amongst those directly affected, and there are significant engineering constraints that need to be overcome.

**COMMENT:**

Clearly the proposed new rail links would face major environmental concerns and delivery problems, whereas the proposed LBIA Parkway Station would only require construction of a simple twin platform station in a greenfield environment – admittedly in a cutting. However the preferred location is currently a nearly derelict farm with a hard vehicle road from the adjacent Scotland Lane which leads direct to the nearby Airport Long Stay Car Park

**14.3 Assessment Factors: Distribution & Carbon Emissions**

**Table 34 pages 134-135 Rail Link between Horsforth and LBIA – through services assumed.**

**Distribution:** This rail link is forecast to be used by airline customers, airport employees. It also has the potential to provide inbound (to Leeds only) Park and Ride facilities. As a result of this the distribution of impacts is wide, in line with the dispersed Origins and Destinations of these users. Distributional analysis has been completed as part of the model interrogation, but this has not been converted into a full GIS based demographic or spatial assessment.

**Carbon emissions:** This scheme will provide a viable option to the private car and has the potential to reduce the number of vehicles travelling from Bradford and Leeds to LBIA by promoting modal shift, and accommodating future growth in a sustainable way. The scheme also has the potential to facilitate inbound (to Leeds or Bradford) Park and Ride to take further car trips off the highway network. This will result in a direct reduction in carbon emissions.

**Table 35 page 136-137 Parkway Station on the Leeds – Harrogate – York Rail Line:**

**Distribution:** The Parkway Station is really only likely to be attractive to airport users, as most employees from a local catchment are likely to find the existing bus services more convenient. As such, the benefits are restricted to this group and benefits will be spread over a wide area, but only at a very low level.

**Carbon emissions:** This scheme will provide a viable option to the private car for some airport users and thus reduce the number of vehicles travelling to LBIA. This will result in a direct reduction in carbon emissions.

**COMMENT:**

Clearly these statements are inconsistent as the proposed LBIA Parkway Station will be far more effective than a direct Horsforth-Airport Link as it will operate at a higher frequency and also serve Harrogate, Knaresborough and York, as well as Leeds. Furthermore many other towns in Yorkshire could be served through frequent rail connections in Leeds and York. Hence it could be used by many more airline customers and airport employees than a rail link that only has a connection to Leeds.

The report also highlights the potential of the proposed new rail link to promote park and ride into Leeds and yet it dismisses the benefits of park and ride at the proposed LBIA Parkway Station, when this is a fundamental part of our proposal, fully detailed in our supporting papers. The whole point of proposing a Parkway style station is to provide extensive car parking that can be used by residents of Arthington, Bramhope, Cookridge, Pool and Yeadon who work or shop in Leeds city centre.

The same argument applies to the proposed Rail Link from Guiseley via LBIA to Horsforth detailed in Table 36 pages 138-139.

#### **14.4 Assessment Factors: Reliability and Connectivity impact on Business users**

##### **Table 34 pages 134-135 Rail Link between Horsforth and LBIA**

**Reliability and Connectivity** This scheme delivers significant improvements in connectivity from the main centres and intermediate stations. This will be complemented by improved wider connectivity by interchange at Leeds. The provision of through rail services at Horsforth would clearly provide far greater connectivity improvements, and there would be the potential to operate services to onwards destinations through Leeds.

##### **Table 35 pages 136-137 Parkway Station on the Leeds – Harrogate – York Rail Line:**

**Reliability and Connectivity:** The station would mainly benefit airport users due to its remote location (i.e. not close to existing housing, etc.) and does not really have a dual function.

**COMMENT:** This statement is simply not valid as the proposed LBIA Parkway Station would be very popular as a commuter route from North Leeds into the City Centre – and also to Harrogate, Knaresborough and York.

The proposed higher frequency service on the existing Harrogate Line would also provide a faster route to the Airport for residents across North and West Yorkshire, as detailed in our paper on Potential benefits for Leeds City Region towns (Ref: HT472)

## **15. RECOMMENDATIONS BY WSPPB**

In Section 12.3 on page 144, the report states: *There are a number of potential options that emerge from this study. Considering the overarching strategic objective of the study to identify and appraise measures to improve the existing connectivity between LBIA and its catchment area, in addition to the standard economic calculations resulting in the Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR), we need to consider the measures identified in the study to assess the impact of a particular scheme, these being:*

- Travel time indicators: the average travel time from origins to destinations; and*
- Accessibility indicator: providing a measure of the number/percentage of people able to access the airport, expressed as the number of households multiplied by the average occupation within defined travel times. This is driven by improvements in journey time and changes in land use.*

*Changes to journey times as a result of the schemes are set out in the scheme assessments (for example in Table 25).*

*Taking these all aspects of into account, and considering the results of the economic appraisal and wider VfM assessment we would recommend the following schemes be taken forward from the study for further and more detailed appraisal at future stages as they provide the greatest impact on the range of project objectives and indicators, whilst also indicating a positive BCR:*

- Short/Medium Term - A65 to Leeds Bradford International Airport Link Road (40mph) with improved bus services to Leeds and Bradford**
- Long Term - Heavy Rail (Guiseley – LBIA – Horsforth)** – *Although currently presenting a relatively low (but positive) BCR, the limitations of the modelling approach highlighted during the study indicate that although the cost side of the equation appears relatively sound at this stage, the demand is likely to be understated particularly when considering intermediate journeys and the ability to provide longer distance through trips on the rail network. More detailed railhead and MOIRA demand modelling would help to understand the likely market for such a service. Further engineering analysis would be required to demonstrate the work needed in order to deliver a rail link considering local topography, along with analysis of rail timetable requirements and more detailed revenue forecasting. This scheme can only be delivered if other infrastructure investment allowing through services from Leeds and Bradford is forthcoming.*

*The Highway and Rail options should not be seen as mutually exclusive as they deliver a different set of benefits. New, emerging technology such as Tram Train may present additional opportunities and provide lower capital and operating costs, with better traction performance. The delivery of schemes should also be viewed in the context of significant changes to the transport network resulting from the delivery of High Speed Rail to the City Region (both HS2 and now potentially HS3). It is seen as essential that all areas of LCR can gain the benefits of High Speed connectivity, and new infrastructure will no doubt be part of emerging plans in this respect.*

**COMMENT:** It is very surprising that without further explanation our proposals for an LBIA Parkway Station are at this stage simply dropped from the review of options. We do not dispute the short/medium term recommendation for a new Airport Link Road from the A65, but we strongly object to the recommended long term heavy rail link from Guiseley to LBIA to Horsforth, and the omission of the proposed LBIA Parkway Station which is an easily achievable solution at a much lower cost.

The report correctly states that the highway and rail options should not be seen as mutually exclusive as they deliver a different set of benefits. Therefore we submit that the LBIA Parkway Station proposal should be taken forward for detailed design and evaluation alongside the other two options.

The direct connection between the LBIA Parkway Station and Leeds City Centre should operate at a 15 minute frequency when the Harrogate Line is electrified, without all the heavy capital and operating costs of a new line and extra rolling stock needed for the proposed Guiseley-LBIA-Horsforth Rail Link, which is only proposed as a 30 minute frequency anyway – although currently no paths are available!

In terms of future aspirations for a link to the proposed HS2 and HS3 high speed line, Leeds City Station will have such a connection and hence the proposed Harrogate Line service achieves this objective. Furthermore the LBIA Parkway Station could be designed and constructed to handle the new IEP trains which are scheduled to operate a direct Harrogate to Kings Cross service via Leeds from 2019. This would give all the stations on the East Coast Main Line a fast connection to the Airport via either Leeds or York.

Building the proposed LBIA Parkway Station will be very beneficial to the Airport whilst also serving all the residents and businesses in north-west Leeds and the hundreds of thousands visitors to Leeds, Harrogate and York, whether for business or leisure. It will maximise the benefits of the proposed electrification of the line and the investment in new signaling and upgraded rolling stock.

Surely this is an investment opportunity that should not be rejected due to West Yorkshire politicians denying any benefit to North Yorkshire, or due to the Airport Management resisting any improvement in public transport that might result in a reduction in their long stay car parking revenues.



Response compiled by Brian L Dunsby, BSc, CEng, FIChemE, FPRI, FIBA, FIM.  
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Chief Executive, Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce,  
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