HS2 Cycleway Project
Liverpool to Manchester

Description of route options from Liverpool to Widnes, Runcorn, Warrington and Manchester

This document is one of 20 appendices to the main HS2 Cycleway Project Report. It sets out the preferred route and key links identified in workshops and subsequent field surveys.

It also describes additional and alternative routes as well as links to many of the communities near to the HS2 Railway route.

The detailed mapping shows the different traffic free and on road sections, and includes brief notes and photographs of points of particular interest along each section of route.
1. Albert Dock forms an iconic destination along any potential cycle route; however the historic nature of the area restricts the range of interventions available. Any intensification of cycle usage will also need to be managed with high pedestrian densities during peak times and peak seasons i.e. alternative options.

2. The Kings Parade (right) is an attractive promenade, where the existing NCN 56 route is defined as a shared use pedestrian/cycle path. Kings Parade itself is traffic calmed (priority working) and low trafficked carriageway and provides a suitable alternative as demand increases. Improvements could be made by providing cycle bypasses through built -outs and priority sections.

3. The promenade continues parallel to Atlantic Way (below) as a 4m wide shared use footway/cycleway, but is segregated from neighbouring communities by palisade fencing and few access points. More inviting boundary treatment and increased number of accesses would improve the attractiveness of this route.

4. The route skirts around the southern side of Festival Park and on beyond Otterspool Park and Promenade, which benefits from an attractive shared use esplanade. The surface is generally good, however the route is exposed to the prevailing wind from the west.

5. Access along the waterfront is lost due in the vicinity of Beechwood due to third party ownership.

6. In the absence of acquiring the waterfront route option, the route should utilise Riversdale Road, to provide a connection with the A561, a primary arterial route in to Liverpool.

7. The A561 Aigburth Road is dominated by vehicular traffic and parking, but offers the opportunity to be redesigned to better serve cyclists needs. The route provides the opportunity to connect Liverpool South Parkway, New Mersey Retail Park and Liverpool John Lennon Airport. The section of A561 Aigburth Road between Grassendale Road and Bowden Road will require some reallocation of on-street parking to enable a high quality cycle route to be provided alongside this dual carriageway section.

The River Mersey forms an inviting promenade route into the heart of Liverpool City Centre. The route is already signed as National Cycle Network (NCN) 56, part of the Transport Pennine Trail.
8. Bowden Road provides a connection to Liverpool South Parkway Station; it is an existing traffic calmed street, which could be further improved using filtered permeability or designated as a cycle street.

9. Claredon Road is a treeline quiet street with residential frontages to the south and park land to the north; cycle provision could be improved through additional traffic calming or providing a segregated route through use of a strip of park land.

10. The B5171 Woolton Road forms a significant barrier to cycling through its car dominated design; appropriate measures should be provided to improve access to the parkway station, including single phase crossings.

11. The principal route option is considered to be via A562 Speke Road, which serves as a spine road for the local community. Speke Road benefits from an existing segregated two-way cycle track and provides access to a number of local facilities and employment centres including retail parks and Jaguar Land Rover’s Halewood plant.

12. A connection to Liverpool John Lennon Airport would be very desirable, providing access to employment opportunities, as well as Speke Hall adjacent to the airport.

Alternative Route—Coastal Option

A. The development of the Mersey Way, an existing Long Distance Walking Route, offers the opportunity to enhance the existing path network through the Speke and Garston Nature Reserve, traversing the southern side of Liverpool John Lennon Airport. The route would also serve the National Trust property of Speke Hall. The majority of paths throughout the nature reserve are less than 2m wide, shared use and unbound.

Alternative Route—Connection to Halewood

B. To the north of Liverpool South Parkway a connection could be made via Brunt Lane, which follows the southern boundary of Allerton cemetery to connect with Hillfoot Road in the east; the route would eventually connect with Halewood Triangle Country Park and the existing NCN62.
11. Hale Road serves as the airport’s northern perimeter road, but along the majority of it is paralleled by quieter residential streets (i.e. Hale Drive) which could be converted to cycle streets.

12. Beyond the urban area of Speke, the route would continue along Hale Road, already designated as part of the NCN62 route, but could benefit significantly from additional traffic calming or purchase of agricultural land to the north to service a segregated cycle route.

13. A connection via Hale Hall could provide an additional point of interest for tourists.

14. A coastal route could provide an attractive leisure route, but is considered to be too indirect to serve as part of the linear route.

15. Marsh land presents a significant challenge to completing a coastal route along this section; although a ‘boardwalk’ type arrangement may be possible with further investigation.

16. A segregated path could be provided by acquiring agricultural land behind the hedge along sections of Hale Gate Road.
Widnes & Runcorn

17. To the west of Hale Bank the existing NCN 65 follows the estuary bank along a 2.5m wide unbound path, before crossing the Ditton Brook, and rising quickly via a timber switchback ramp (below). Facilities for cycling could be significantly improved if the stepped arrangement could be converted to a ramp e.g. resiting the bridge at an angle to reduce the overall gradient change on land.

Alternative—Northern Option

C1. Higher Road is a single carriageway road with no existing facilities for cycling, but has could provide an important link between Widnes/Runcorn and the employment sites of JLR and the airport.

C2. Ditton Road is an industrial estate road, serving a number of commercial premises, but also provides a parallel route to the A562 for cyclists. Various traffic calming measures could be employed to create a more attractive environment for cyclists.

Connection to Runcorn

18. The southern coast route provides a significant opportunity to provide connections with Runcorn, to the south of the Mersey and to maximise the benefits of the Mersey Gateway project, which will incorporate the downgrading of the Silver Jubilee Bridge, comprising the reallocation of a traffic lane for non-motorised users.

Spur to Widnes Town Centre

19. A satellite link connecting the linear route with Widnes Road (high street) would provide an important connection for the town. Widnes Road is pedestrianised in sections and could benefit from permitting cyclists (potentially restricted to specific times).

20. The most direct route would extend through Asda car park, requiring negotiation.

21. To the east of Widnes the route would utilise the recently upgraded shared use path to the south of The Hive Leisure Park (3m wide), connecting Widnes town centre with the NCN62 (TPT).
Widnes to Warrington

22. The NCN62 (TPT) extends along the southern side of the St Helens Canal, which is disused for much of its length. The path is of variable quality, reducing to 1-1.5m in places, with a number of barriers (right).

23. Entering the western side of Warrington the NCN62 skirts around the southern side of the town, continuing along the Manchester Ship Canal.

24. The HS3 Cycleway however provides the opportunity to provide a route in to the heart of Warrington and assist in the down grading of the Old Liverpool Road (right).
25. The A5061 Sankey Road (below) forms a strategic traffic route into Warrington town centre, but also one of a limited number of crossing points over the West Coast Main Line. The provision of segregated cycle tracks would provide an important link for the town centre, as well as providing access to Warrington Bank Quay station.

26. Sankey Street and Bridge Street are pedestrianised shopping streets, but the opportunity to open these routes to cyclists should be explored. Alternative routes around the perimeter of the shopping core should be upgraded as an alternative.

27. To the south of Warrington town centre, a long term aspiration is for the conversion of the disused railway spur extending to the southeast of the town. The route comprises an existing bridge crossing of the River Mersey (left); however its delivery is dependent on the operational needs of Network Rail.

D1. Knutsford Road provides an alternative or interim option. It comprised a wide carriageway with a wide promenade along the southern bank of the River Mersey. Segregated cycle track could be provided to significantly enhance cycling facilities into the town centre.
Warrington to Altrincham

The preferred option is to utilise the existing NCN62 Trans Pennine Trail between Warrington and Altrincham, following the former railway path.

The quality of the route is variable, in terms of width and surfacing. The project offers the opportunity to significantly upgrade the quality and facilities along the route.

28. The route crosses below the M6 as a segregated cycle facility; however the effective width for cycling could be improved through environmental improvements (below)

29. Beyond the M6 junction the route passes beneath the A56 Camsley Lane via the former railway crossing (above left).

30. Improved crossing facilities are required at Birch Brook Road, potentially a controlled crossing (i.e a Zebra or Toucan crossing, subject to traffic flow and speed measurements) and removal of barriers along route (above middle)

31. Improved crossing facilities are required at Mill Lane.

32. Proposed improved connection to National Trust property at Dunham Massey via proposed HS2 Cycleway.

33. The proposed route diverges from NCN62 at this point, requiring traffic calming on a short section of Seamon’s Road, to provide a connection with the proposed towpath route following the Bridgewater Canal. Barriers should also be removed (above right)
34. The Bridgewater Canal provides a direct route in to Manchester City Centre, connecting with a number of CCAG and proposed strategic routes. Significant sections of the route already have funding committed to them for improvement, which could be enhanced by the HS3 cycleway scheme.

35. Whilst the Bridgewater Canal provides a direct route in to Manchester City Centre, a connection to Salford Quays and Media City is considered to be strategically important. The route could utilise the existing two-way cycle track along Europa Way; although modifications at road crossings will be required to improve convenience for cyclists.

36. The recently constructed bridge at Media City provides an attractive gateway to Media City from the south and an important crossing point for the Manchester Ship Canal.
Salford to Manchester

37. Improved junction arrangements required at Broadway / A5063 Trafford Road junction to provide crossing facility for cyclists, leading to Goodiers Drive beyond.

38. Goodiers Drive to provide a quietway option, avoiding the grade separated A57 Regent Road / A5063 Trafford Road roundabout junction to north.

39. A57 Regent Road is an arterial route in to Manchester City Centre, but offers the most direct and convenient connection to Media City. The availability of space within the public highway is variable and may require reallocation of road space in some locations.

40. The junction of Regent Road, Trinity Way and Dawson Street forms a complex signal junction and whilst facilities for cyclists are provided the existing layout and phasing arrangements are not convenient for cyclists.

41. The connection across the City Centre would seek to complement the on-going Manchester City Centre Cycling Infrastructure Plan; but could feasibly use Whitworth Street as the most direct connection to Manchester Piccadilly and the proposed HS2 station.

F1. Liverpool Street is a former arterial route in to Manchester City Centre and benefits from a wide carriageway with advisory cycle lanes. The route presents an excellent opportunity for high quality cycle infrastructure, such as segregated or semi segregated ‘stepped’ cycle tracks; however it is less direct as a connection to Salford Quays.
HS3 Cycleway (Liverpool-Manchester leg) Overview
Design Standards - Summary

A set of design standards was developed as part of the first stage of the feasibility study. These are available as a separate document. The design standards strongly emphasise the need for continuity and integration of cycle infrastructure, and that facilities should be appealing to the end user and also consider the needs of non-users. The design standards are a working document, and will be reviewed throughout this stage of the feasibility study in order to best take into account differing local contexts.

The design standards are consistent with the project’s overall aim of the National Cycleway being a domestic exemplar of what high-quality integrated modern cycling infrastructure looks like: safe, direct, coherent, comfortable and attractive. The design standards also emphasise that adaptability will be important as the UK grows its cycling mode-share.

A strong focus is on the best practice seen in places with high levels of utility cycling like the Netherlands and Denmark. Attention is also paid to inclusivity, which not only covers all potential types of cyclists – including those with mobility impairment – but accessibility for all types of other users who will interact with the infrastructure. Benefits to the wider community should also be encouraged: even if individuals do not directly use the route for transport or leisure purposes, the design should take the opportunity for place-making along the route to improve the attractiveness of town centres or other areas through which the route passes.

The default position of the design standards is that cyclists should be afforded their own dedicated space with physical separation from other users. This is an effort to move away from infrastructure strategies that default to a shared use path, or on-carriageway facilities with limited protection from motor vehicles on busy roads. The design standards, however, do allow for sharing with motor traffic, pedestrians or equestrians in certain circumstances – normally where volumes are low. Steps may nevertheless be required to engineer these conditions where they are not currently present. It is likely that many extant greenways through open space or in the countryside which are shared with pedestrians and equestrians would already be suitable for use by the National Cycleway with few changes necessary. In more built-up environments, however, the design standards promote the implementation of dedicated infrastructure for cyclists, consistent with the best practice found elsewhere in the world where cycling for everyday journeys is commonplace.

The design standards acknowledge the varied contexts of the areas through which the route is likely to pass. Quality of infrastructure should be highest where potential for the route to be used is greatest, which is in urban areas or between sizeable settlements in rural areas. However, designs should not be put forward that prevent further expansion as usage grows or new journey possibilities are created that stimulate demand for movement.
HS2 Cycleway: A visual checklist of proposed standards

Throughout the section of HS2 Cycleway route described in these notes, it is intended that the overall route is created to the highest standards of design, of surface, of continuity and attractiveness all based on current best practice guidelines, including the Dutch CROW manual. The following examples drawn from England and Holland indicate what is intended, even though the brief descriptive notes attached to the route section maps may not explicitly say so. The photographs are loosely arranged to run from the town to the countryside ending up with the all-important junction and crossings details. These are required at each and every intersection with trafficked roads.

0  The HS2 Cycle route will start in the traffic calmed core of the town where cyclists share the road space on equal terms with motor vehicles. (Massluis)

1  Almost without exception cyclists will be permitted 2 way down one way streets in order to maximise their direct networks. (Gouda)

2  Sympathetic treatment of main street in typical small town

3  Closure of main street to traffic. (Rotterdam)

4  Typical English town with “pedestrianised” town centre already paved to delineate cyclists. (Stafford)

5  The Embankment, London, showing the space created for the Cycle Superhighway

6  Where space is limited the removal of the central white line and introduction of advisory cycle provision emphasises the presence of cyclists. (Gouda)

7  One lane of the road made into a two way cycling track (Redcliffe Bridge, Bristol)

8  Reallocation of road space through residential development to create 2 way cycle route. (Breda)
9 Cycle track set well back from main road and separated by avenue trees. (Rotterdam)

10 Wide promenade in urban park. (Tamworth)

11 New cycle track in Warwick University grounds with lighting

12 Typical railway path, 2.5m wide rural areas, 3.0m minimum urban areas. (Derby, Melbourne)

13 Wide towpath on Calder navigation

14 Narrow 2m wide towpath on Erewash Canal; note sealed surface with appropriate coloured gravel

15 Typical National Route in rural areas on lightly trafficked road. (Boxtel to Eindhoven)

16 Typical measures to show traffic on lightly trafficked rural roads on routes advertised for cyclists

17 Quiet lane approaching Lichfield – 20mph

18 Typical minor cul-de-sac in Holland, links to ongoing path for cyclists. No motor vehicles permitted except farm vehicles
19 Similar farm access on the way to Waddesdon

20 National Cycleroute (LF) parallel to main road in rural Holland. (LF13 Alphen)

21 Stone based cycle route through National Forest near Ashby-de-la-Zouch

22 Field boundary path with cattle grid and wicket gate approaching Kenilworth

23 Single stage toucan crossing of dual carriageway in Aylesbury

24 Dual use crossing of side road in Gouda

25 Cycling zebra at Aylesbury

26 Priority crossing of side road at Gouda

27 Path continuing parallel to main road (Gouda). Note the crossing is arranged on the desire line
28 Priority crossing in Rotterdam

29 Continuity of route on London Cycle Superhighway to Canary Wharf

30 Direct priority crossing in Lancaster

31 Direct crossing in York on the desire line

32 Treatment of approaches to splitter island at roundabout in Aylesbury

33 New shared use bridge over railway at Aylesbury Station

34 Tank Top bridleway bridge over M1

35 Major new cycle route attached to railway bridge approaching Nijmegen

36 Wide, on the level, underbridge at Tamworth