



**Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link**

**Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report**

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A report of the working group established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Report Contributors**

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We would like to recognise the significant work of Licia Woodhead.

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

### A rail link for Bradford

*Submission for a Cross Bradford Rail Link (better known as CrossRail).*

#### Proposal

To develop a rail link between the South and North of Bradford, with economic benefits for the city centre, the Bradford district and the wider economy.

#### Background

A CrossRail link in Bradford is not about railway lines, it is about economic regeneration. As a parallel the building of the M606 motorway in the 1970's was not about a two mile strip of tarmac ending at Rooley Lane, it was about boosting the economy and making Bradford easier to access.

Does anyone believe that the huge Marks & Spencer distribution centre would have been located in Bradford if the M606 did not link the city to the rest of the world<sup>12</sup>?

Due to the congestion and the price of oil the efficiency of motorways is in decline and it is generally accepted that railways are what will enable communities to grow in the 21st century.

#### Image

We all remember arriving into Bradford on the M606 with faded road-cones at the end of our unfinished motorway, it didn't create a positive first impression for Bradford and unfortunately the image of our current local rail network continue to hold back the city.

We unfortunately appear to live in the shadow of our dominant neighbour, Bradford needs to remember: "We are not Leeds".

Bradford is a cultural destination in its own right, 3 major theatres<sup>3</sup> a world class university<sup>4</sup> an excellent college, home to a UNSECO world heritage site<sup>5</sup>, a UNESCO City of Film<sup>6</sup> and home of the Brontë's.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://corporate.marksandspencer.com/investors/press\\_releases/new\\_distribution\\_centre\\_in\\_bradford](http://corporate.marksandspencer.com/investors/press_releases/new_distribution_centre_in_bradford)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.prologis.co.uk/our-customers/case-studies/mands-bradford.php>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.bradford-theatres.co.uk/>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.bradford.ac.uk/undergraduate/why-bradford/>

<sup>5</sup><http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1028>

<sup>6</sup>[http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=39784&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39784&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

Bradford has the third largest population in Yorkshire<sup>7</sup>, the fourth largest in England and fifth largest in Britain.

Our population is likely to increase by 20% in the next 40 years, according to the Office of National Statistics<sup>8</sup>.

Bradford *should* be booming!

### Our Problem



Inbound tourism has fallen significantly in recent years<sup>9</sup> with a boarded-up city centre at the Westfield Development and Park at the Heart, the image of for those travelling to or through Bradford is not inspiring.

Bradford has the second highest number of people who are the poorest in Yorkshire: Over 40% of Bradfordian's are in the bottom 20% of income bracket. Areas to the south of the city such as Wyke and Low Moor have the some of the lowest employment rates in Bradford. The proposed Low Moor railway station will go some way to improving opportunities for employment, however a rail link to North Bradford, an area of comparatively higher employment will provide a significant *local* shot in the arm.

At the meeting in February 2011 that established the CrossRail working group we were informed there were over 3000 vacant residential properties in Bradford. With improved transport links, we could fill the properties.

Other areas seem to have been able to build a railway link across a city using Bridges and viaducts to connect two separate stations to provide an integrated service, without "improving walking links and signage". Leeds being an excellent local example, though they fixed their problem in the 19th Century, could you imagine hundreds of people each hour still walking between Wellington Street to Marsh Lane in Leeds<sup>10</sup> to catch the train? Or is it more likely they just wouldn't bother.

### Funding

The council is not being asked to foot the bill, for it is accepted there is no money left in the municipal purse. Rather we are asking our Councillors to get behind the *idea* of CrossRail, to

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<sup>7</sup>[http://www.bradfordobservatory.com/assets/docs\\_rd\\_pdf/regional\\_trends\\_yh.pdf](http://www.bradfordobservatory.com/assets/docs_rd_pdf/regional_trends_yh.pdf)

<sup>8</sup><http://www.yhpho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=92143>

<sup>9</sup>[http://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/local/localbrad/8868505.National\\_Media\\_Museum\\_visitor\\_level\\_falls\\_by\\_12/](http://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/local/localbrad/8868505.National_Media_Museum_visitor_level_falls_by_12/)

<sup>10</sup><http://tinyurl.com/5w49c2f>

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

promote the concept, to pull the stops and lobby people, organisations both public and private to provide the finance for CrossRail to happen.

With the will of the people of Bradford, the council, our MPs (with whom there is growing support). Remember Cllr Greenwood and Chris Leslie went to London and lobbied clearly for the Bingley Bypass at a cost of £97 million<sup>11</sup>.

Metro want to create a new platform at Leeds to accommodate extra Skipton/Bradford services, with CrossRail this additional platform would not be needed, the money set aside being used in Bradford. We don't need additional platform lengthening on the Airedale or Wharfedale line, with CrossRail we can improve the speed of turn around at Bradford and improve capacity at Shipley (a bottleneck by design), significantly increasing the speed of services. We can operate more services with the same rolling stock.

### Perception

CrossRail is a relatively easy sell to the public: allowing people to travel from one place to another. Residents and businesses can see what it is and understand it. With CrossRail people ask questions about 'how', 'where', 'what if', they rarely ask 'Why'.



### Current Rail

Bradford is a city of two halves, the electrified north, where over 80% of all journeys are by rail, and the diesel south. Over 4 million rail journeys a year are made to and from wider region.

The population of Bradford is expected to increase between 10 and 20% (60,000 - 120,000) in the next 20 years, and they will need access to both local and regional employment.

### Our long term aim

We believe a rail link joining the two existing railway lines would create a position where it would be possible to increase the commuter flow through Bradford without creating additional road vehicle usage.

We believe a central rail link will showcase Bradford to those travelling through the city centre, will decrease journey times and enable an increase in the service offering.

A railway station in the heart of Bradford would encourage commuters and tourists to visit Bradford, both during the day and the evening. The current stations are not an attractive site or sight to visitors of Bradford.

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<sup>11</sup>[http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/documents/POPE\\_A650\\_Bingley\\_FYA\\_website\\_part\\_A.pdf](http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/documents/POPE_A650_Bingley_FYA_website_part_A.pdf)

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

### Some numbers about Transport in Bradford

Bradford Interchange and Forster Square are the 3rd and 4th busiest stations in West Yorkshire. Over 40,000 passengers travel into each station, **just to change trains at that station**. This represents 1% of all journeys.

Leeds is a highly congested station serving over 21 million commuters a year, however over 2 million passengers pass through Leeds station simply to change trains<sup>12</sup>, not contributing to the Leeds economy, but contributing to the railway bottleneck, especially at the Western end of station.

### ***Put another way: 10% of all Leeds bound passengers don't want to go to Leeds!***



Currently a FreeCityBus service operates between the two stations operating in a single direction circuitous route that makes journey times from Forster Square to the Interchange unbearable. The service carries just under a million passengers a year<sup>13</sup>. It certainly not possible to state that all those passengers are commuting between the two stations, though there is certainly a large number of passengers who commute by foot between the two stations.

If only half those who used by the FreeCityBus went between the two stations (450,000), there would be more passengers than all of the passengers of Wakefield Kirkgate, and still more than half of the stations in West Yorkshire.

Network Rail supports extra development on Bradford to Shipley rail line<sup>14</sup>, including additional stations at Manningham. Surely we need to make it easier for people in Manningham to travel across Bradford or they won't and they'll go to Leeds.

It is already Bradford Council's policy to protect disused railway lines from redevelopment, (Policy TM5), taken together with council policy TM4 to open new stations, the council's own standing policies can be used to protect large parts of the proposed route.

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<sup>12</sup><http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/nav.1529>

<sup>13</sup><http://www.wyita.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E1B3637D-1D42-4ED2-9B45-3255FDF3801F/0/EB30SEPTEMBER2011ITEM12.pdf>

<sup>14</sup><http://www.bradford.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/37D20D2A-DCC7-44DE-ADFD-ABB272EFA1B6/0/Mainreportwithappendices.pdf> (appendix C)

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

### Economic benefits of CrossRail

- Increased access to employment
- Faster & easier access for commuters to cross the city
- Creates an electrification impetus for faster, electric trains in all of West Yorkshire
- Easier access to the tourism sectors of Bradford: 20% of visitors to Haworth come from the North West, which for rail travel means travelling via Leeds
- Not dependent on Leeds for fast communication links
- Bradford is ready to reap the benefits of HS2 when it comes to Leeds
- Improved case for rail access to Leeds Bradford airport
- Reduced road congestion

### Rail benefits of CrossRail

- More journey opportunities via Bradford, avoiding congestion in Leeds, this would have the effect of reducing the need for concentrated investment in Leeds station.
- CrossRail would provide Leeds with 3 different routes out to Manchester (Huddersfield, Caldervale and Airedale).
- Journey time reductions when the Northern Hub is introduced, including faster journey times between Leeds and Huddersfield via Shipley (The airedale line has a significantly faster line speed than Caldervale).
- Opportunities for container freight services, currently freight is unable to travel via the Caldervale line following the removal of the Bowling Curve. CrossRail would allow freight operators to explore new services.
- Bradford would become a true metro rail city with 15 in-district linked railway stations, without considering services to Leeds (see attached map).

### What about Westfield?

When Westfield is built the line would run at approximately second floor level, this would provide an ideal opportunity for the developer to provide access from a platform to the retail units. This direct into centre level of access is not available at either White Rose, Meadowhall or Trafford Centre that all suffer considerable road congestion. CrossRail would offer similar levels of access and service as the Westfield Stratford development in London.

Just as Westfield will benefit from CrossRail with passengers being able to directly access the shopping centre, so therefore CrossRail benefits from Westfield. It would be their responsibility to finance the cost of the station, just as they are funding the changes to the road layout around their centre.

The ability to walk seamlessly from the station to shopping centre should not be underestimated for convenience, and all weather retail.

## **Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report**

We have the opportunity to include rail transport into the proposed Westfield development, by including rail from the start, it will won't suffer the limitations of White Rose, being within 100 yards of a busy railway line, but without station access.

Bradford has suffered from Westfield (and its predecessor schemes), it is time to take control of Bradford City Centre, to protect the route of the railway and protect the future of Bradford, this is a once in a lifetime chance to change Bradford. This opportunity will not come again.

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

### Support for CrossRail

We have been told we need to get community and business support for CrossRail, here is a small selection of just some of the support::

**MPs** supporting Early Day Motion 2112 calling on Bradford Council to undertake a full feasibility study of Bradford CrossRail

Hugh Bailey (York Central)  
Jeremy Corbyn (Islington North)  
Philip Davies (Shipley) including letter of support  
Hywel Francis (Aberavon)  
Kelvin Hopkins (Luton North)  
John McDonnell (Hayes & Harlington)  
Linda Riordan (Halifax)  
Gerry Sutcliffe (Bradford South) including letter of support  
Marsha Singh (Bradford West) including letter of support  
Baron Willis of Knaresborough

### Bradford Town & Parish Councils

Baildon Parish Council  
Bradford Trident Community Council  
Burley-in-Wharfedale Parish Council  
Keighley Town Council  
Steeton-with-Eastburn Parish Council  
Wrose Parish Council

### Local Business Community

ATL Centre for Enterprise  
Bostocks Boyce Welsh Chartered Accountants  
Bradford Asian Business Association  
Federation of Small Businesses (Policy Chair, Yorkshire & Humberside)  
Fitzpatrick Commercial Chartered Surveyors  
Halliday Clark Architects  
Newmason Properties Limited  
Quest for Economic Development (QED)  
Redfearn Travel  
Sekhon & Firth Solicitors

### Local Religious Groups

Bradford Council of Mosques  
Hindu Cultural Society  
Yorkshire Sikh Forum

## **Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report**

### **Local Voluntary Organisations**

Aire Valley Rail Users' Group  
Bradford Civic Society  
Bradford Rail Users' Group  
Bradford Senior Power  
Campaign for Better Transport - Leeds  
Halifax & District Rail Action Group  
Keighley Youth Parliament  
Pakistan Society of West Yorkshire

And over 350 individuals

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

### Recommendations

- 1 Announce CrossRail as Bradford Council policy. Instruct officers at the Council and WYITA (Metro) to unite behind the policy and go out and 'bat for Bradford', continue our efforts to encourage public, private and voluntary sector support for CrossRail. With HS2 coming to Leeds, we need better connectivity.
- 2 At the earliest opportunity Bradford Council should protect the route of the proposed railway, including former railway land. i.e. the land on and around the former exchange railway station, the land occupied on the original Forster Square railway station.
- 3 Enter preliminary talks with Westfield regarding CrossRail as part of either their first or second phase development.
- 4 Enter into preliminary talks with Royal Mail and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, regarding the future use of the Valley Road site.
- 5 Request the development of a CrossRail link is an element of the next rail franchising process.

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

### Regular Questions and Myths about CrossRail

- Q** You can't build viaducts and bridges in the city
- A** You only need to look at Leeds, Wakefield, Manchester, Newcastle to see the railway viaducts as an integral part of the city. Leeds station is built primarily on a viaduct.
- Q** There isn't enough space for all existing trains to stop and reverse back in the Westfield site.
- A** That is the whole point of CrossRail! The idea is that they don't reverse in the city, they go through the city to further destinations, but until the full electrification of the Caldervale line, trains will be able to reverse at Bradford Interchange, where there is plenty of capacity.
- Q** It will cost £200 million to built CrossRail, spend the money on something else
- A** We simply don't accept the £200 million figure, other similar schemes have been delivered for much<sup>15</sup> less.
- Q** There isn't capacity at Shipley to allow enough trains.
- A** There is a platform on the Bradford-Skipton route ready to be re-used, and it is wheelchair accessible. By placing the railway track back to its original position, both lines could be used, increasing service frequency not only from Skipton to Bradford, but also to Leeds.
- Q** The bridges on the Baildon route are too low to allow double tracks.
- A** Dig out the ground under the bridges as per the Bradford Road bridge at Menston to allow more ceiling height.
- Q** Hardly anyone travels across Bradford to get to work
- A** Super! Let us abolish the Shipley-Airedale Road. Once you have tried to get across Bradford in the morning to get to work you may understand why people don't take jobs at the other side of the city, because it takes too long to get there? And therefore apply for jobs in Leeds instead.
- Q** CrossRail will deter Westfield from building in Bradford
- A** CrossRail will deliver trains full of potential customers to their doorstep all day long.
- Q** The rail operators don't want it
- A** Northern Rail, the major rail operator in the North of England understands its massive potential. Grand Central have said it was built they'd use it.

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<sup>15</sup>[http://www.eurostar.com/UK/uk/leisure/about\\_eurostar/press\\_release/press\\_archive\\_2006/01\\_12\\_2006\\_viaduct\\_brussels.jsp](http://www.eurostar.com/UK/uk/leisure/about_eurostar/press_release/press_archive_2006/01_12_2006_viaduct_brussels.jsp)

## Report into a Cross-Bradford rail link Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Majority Report

**Q** Bradford doesn't have the money to pay for it

**A** All major schemes such as this are paid for by central government, the City Region would make a contribution.

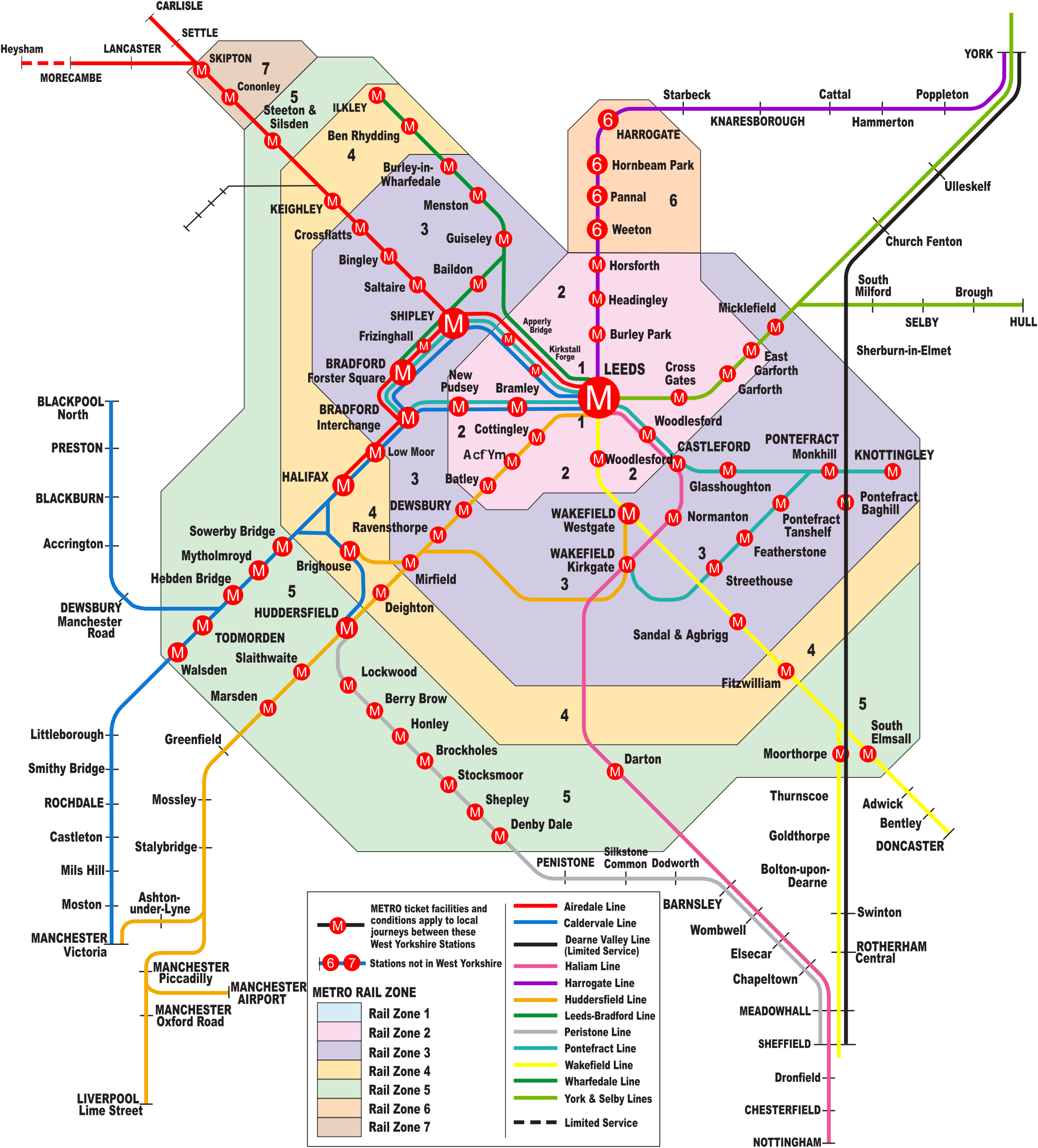
**Q** Does Calderdale want CrossRail?

**A** Calderdale wants fast reliable transport to Manchester and Leeds. Electric trains and higher speed connections via Bradford to Leeds will ensure passengers are travelling on fast, efficient and reliable trains.

### Photo Acknowledgements

Cover Photo: Matt Thorpe (Creative Commons Attribution NC License)

Bradford Interchange – Sepia: David Sykes (Creative Commons Attribution NC License)



	METRO ticket facilities and conditions apply to local journeys between these West Yorkshire Stations		Airedale Line
	Stations not in West Yorkshire		Caldervale Line
			Deerne Valley Line (Limited Service)
	<b>METRO RAIL ZONE</b>		Rail Zone 1
			Rail Zone 2
			Rail Zone 3
			Rail Zone 4
			Rail Zone 5
			Rail Zone 6
			Rail Zone 7
			Haliarn Line
			Harrogate Line
			Huddersfield Line
			Leeds-Bradford Line
			Peristone Line
			Pontefract Line
			Wakefield Line
			Wharfedale Line
			York & Selby Lines
			Limited Service