

# BRIEFING NOTE

**Project Name:** Clitheroe to Hellifield Strategic Outline Business Case

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Subject:** Stakeholder Engagement Briefing Note

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## Introduction

Stantec has been commissioned by Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) to prepare a **Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)** to determine the feasibility and relative benefits of **reinstating a regular passenger rail service along the Ribble Valley Line between Clitheroe and Hellifield and potentially destinations beyond Hellifield.**

The work follows RVBC's successful application for funding from the Government's **Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund** and represents the first stage in the development of a business case for the proposals.

Stantec will work with Allan Rail Solutions Ltd and PRA Operations Planning Ltd to produce the Strategic Outline Business Case reporting to the Project Team for the project which is led by RVBC

## Background

While the existing railway line physically connects Clitheroe and Hellifield, Clitheroe Station is currently the northern terminus point for scheduled passenger services. There is generally an hourly service daily from Clitheroe to Rochdale via Blackburn and Manchester Victoria with some extra trains during weekday peak hours.

Hellifield Station is sited on the Leeds to Morecambe line (the Bentham Line) with Hellifield served by daily regular trains to / from Leeds, Carlisle and Lancaster / Morecambe.

However, other than DalesRail special services (operated on 17 Sundays in 2019 and run by Northern Trains with support from Community Rail Lancashire), no regular passenger services operate between Clitheroe and Hellifield. There is therefore a 'connectivity gap' in passenger service provision between Clitheroe and Hellifield linking the Ribble Valley line with the Leeds-Morecambe line (see Figure 1).

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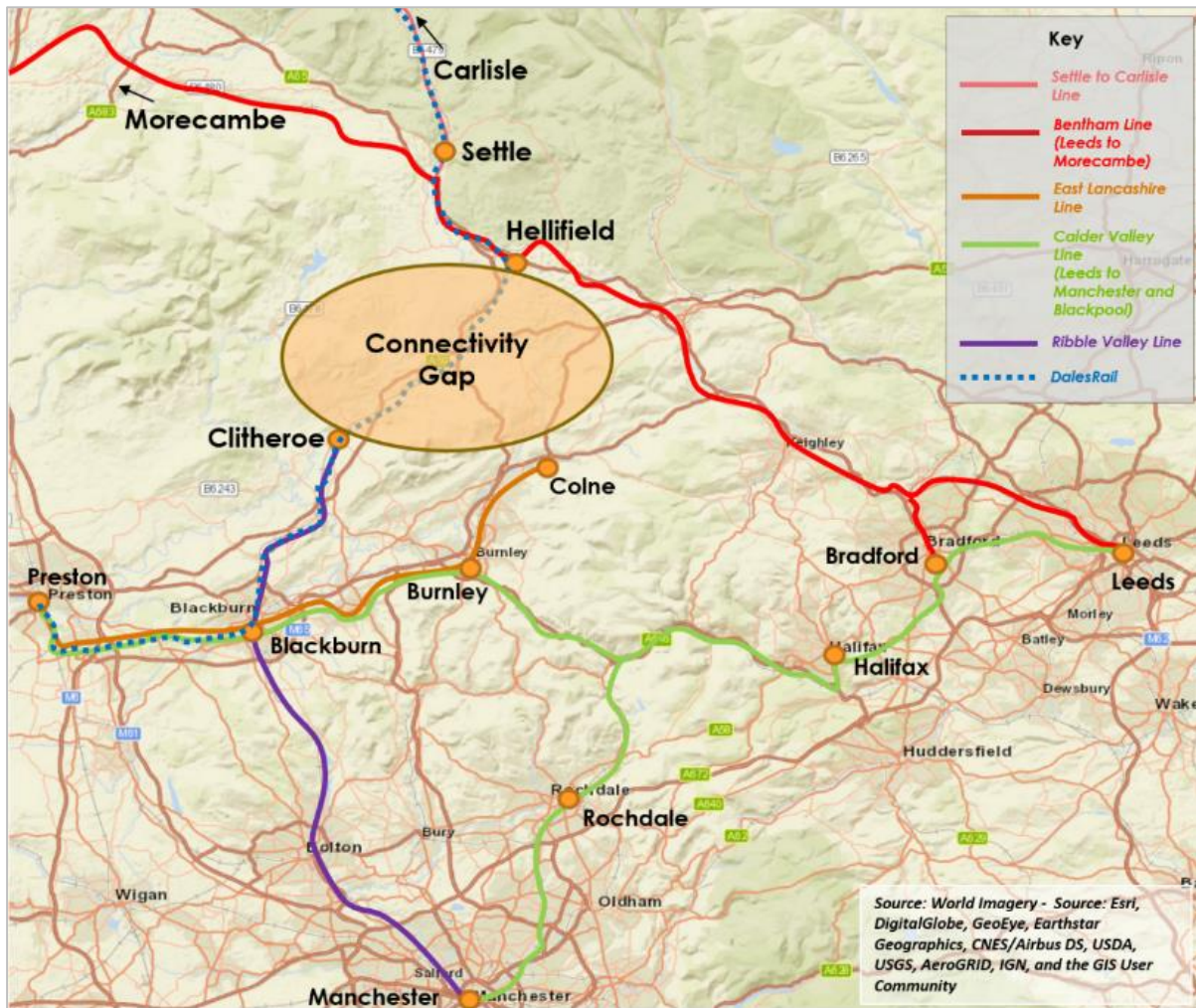


Figure 1: Study Area and Connectivity Gap

Understanding the transport and associated socio-economic benefits that may arise by closing this 'connectivity gap', is the key focus of the SOBC.

The SOBC will be developed using the 'Five Case Model' approach for developing business cases, as required by H.M. Treasury. This will cover:

- **Strategic Case:** Defining the rationale for intervention and identifying a shortlist of options which could deliver the project-specific and wider policy objectives.
- **Economic Case:** Assessing the options to determine their value for money in terms of economic, social and environmental benefits and costs.
- **Financial Case:** A full financial appraisal of the options
- **Commercial Case:** Providing evidence on the commercial viability of the proposals and the procurement strategy that will be used to engage the market.
- **Management Case:** Detailing the project management plans, outlining the framework for managing risk, benefits realisation, post-project evaluation and the project as a whole.



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At the SOBC stage, the primary focus is on the Strategic and Economic Cases (i.e. determining the ‘why’ and ‘what’), with the Commercial, Financial and Management Cases (i.e. the ‘how’) being of lesser prominence.

Identifying a strong rationale for intervention is fundamental as this forms the backbone of the SOBC and ensures that study objectives and the resulting options developed deliver identified socio-economic benefits that positively contribute to local, regional and national policy and strategy objectives.

### Potential Options

Whilst this study has emerged from the *Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund*, the study is considering all potential transport options in order to determine whether the objectives could be met by non-rail solutions. Therefore, high-level options covering all modes of transport are being considered.

Four rail options were presented in the submission to the *Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund* and these will form the starting point for the development of a longer list of multi-modal options. These options are shown in Figure 2.

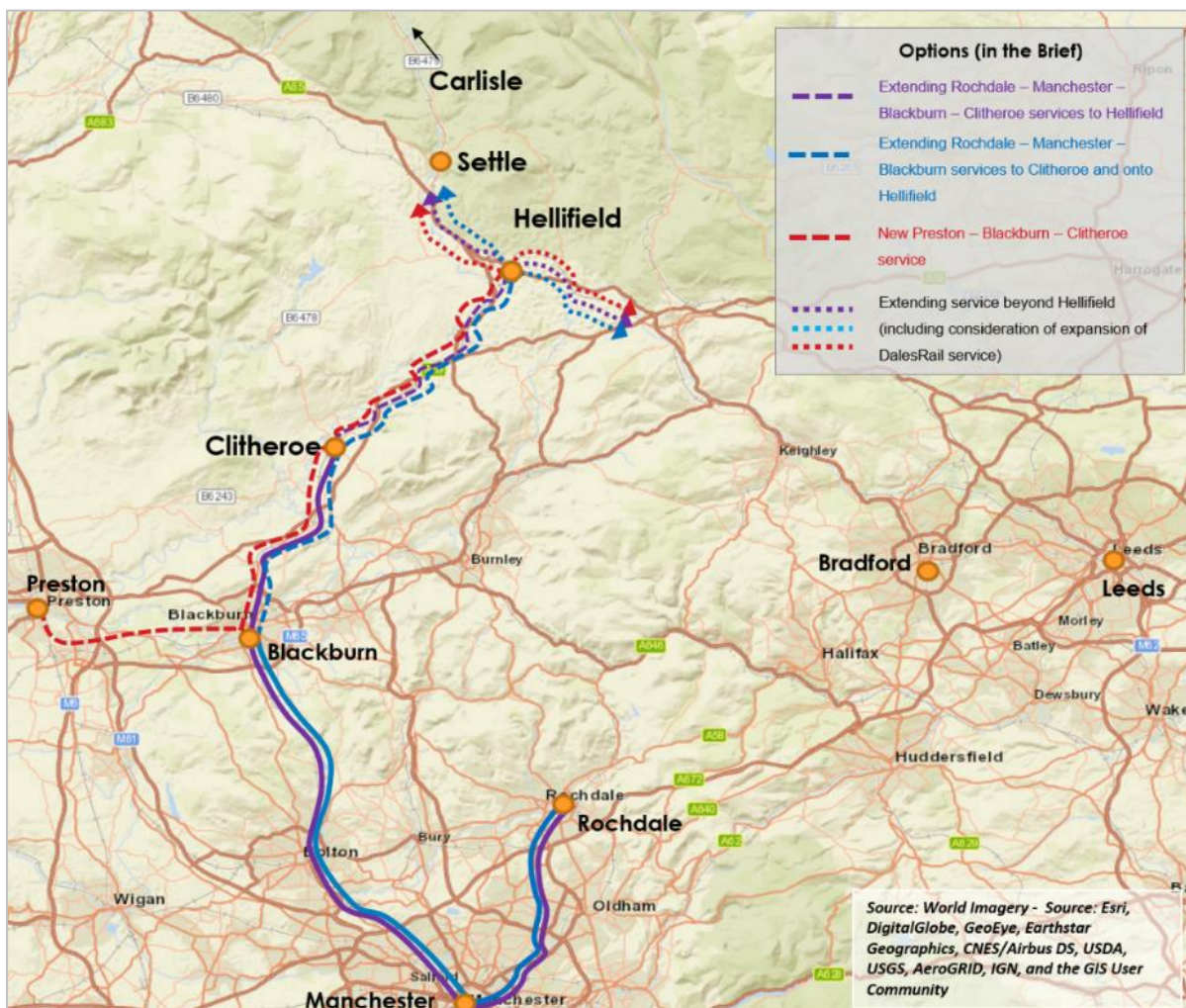


Figure 2: Potential rail options (as presented in the *Restoring Your Railways Ideas Fund* submission)

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### Your Involvement

To inform this study we are undertaking an engagement programme to obtain views on the existing transport problems in the area, the opportunities which could be realised with improved connectivity along the Clitheroe-Hellifield corridor, and the investment aspirations of different groups and the public at large.

As part of this initiative, we are holding **an online Stakeholder Workshop**, where we would like to discuss and obtain the views of your organisation in relation to:

- The study and its objectives
- The sphere of influence of potential options i.e., who will benefit, and how, from closing the 'connectivity gap' between Clitheroe and Hellifield
- What the existing transport problems are for those living within this sphere of influence, and the opportunities which could be realised by improved connectivity in the corridor
- The options you believe would help alleviate existing transport problems
- The type and magnitude of socio-economic outcomes and impacts which improved transport connectivity could generate.