



## South East Manchester Community Rail Partnership

### Response to Arriva Northern's 2018 Timetable proposals

#### Introduction

The South East Manchester Community Rail Partnership (CRP) represents groups of community volunteers, who choose to give their time to the development and improvement of their local rail stations. The CRP covers three lines running into Manchester Piccadilly; Manchester – Glossop / Hadfield, Manchester – Marple and Manchester to Hazel Grove / Middlewood. All three SEM CRP lines meet with the High Peak and Hope Valley CRP that represents volunteers on the more rural ends of the lines.

SEM CRP works closely with Northern Rail in developing services and improving stations and the CRP welcomed the renewed commitment to community engagement generally and Community Rail specifically in the Franchise awarded to Arriva Northern. We recognise Northern's commitment to engagement with the community in this consultation with the time allowed to consult and feedback. We also recognise the scale of the task faced by Northern Rail in carrying out a major and far reaching recast of the entire timetable for the north of England.

The CRP has consulted widely among its volunteer groups and has received a number of formal written responses which are attached to this response as appendices.

#### Overview

It is some considerable time since the timetable received a major review and this is reflected in the fact that the current services offered have failed to keep pace with changing lifestyles, working patterns and the changes to neighbourhoods and centres served by Northern's commuter services.

Weekday commuter services: As ORR figures have displayed consistently for many years, the railway has become an increasingly popular means of travelling to work, for many people having abandoned personal car ownership it is the only means of making commuter journeys of over a few miles. Increasingly congested roads make bus journeys too slow and unreliable and the lack of a Metro network in the south of Manchester and beyond makes rail the only option. The presence of a reliable and frequent rail service is one of the major drivers informing people's decisions about where to establish their home. The growing popularity of services has resulted in high levels of overcrowding on many commuter services this has been exacerbated by aging rolling stock that lacks capacity.



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**Weekend services:** Weekends are now, for many people just another working day, in particular for those employed in retail, leisure and hospitality. Many of these types of employment are popular with young people just starting out on their working lives and often live in more affordable housing areas; many of these areas have historically lacked a Sunday service as there was not thought to be a demand. The other side of this equation is of course for the customers for these services, Sunday has become just another shopping day and for many busy working families it's possibly the only day available for major shopping activities.

**Outdoor leisure:** Over the last decade the population of the urban centre has increased enormously yet rail access to outdoor leisure locations has failed to reflect this. Young people living in crowded urban centres are increasingly seeking to use their leisure time to access the countryside that surrounds their towns and cities, walking, cycling water sports and climbing have all grown in popularity. Many services to these rural gateways are either sporadic in nature, subject to late start times or completely non-existent on a Sunday.

**Night time economy:** Another major change in lifestyle is the development of the night time economies in the major centres. A common complaint by users of train services in the late evening is the relatively early final service out of Manchester and often large gaps in the evening timetable, leaving visitors to the city centre with decisions to leave shows venues early, or use personal transport or an expensive taxi instead.

The CRP's hope for the major timetable recast was that these long standing gaps in service would be addressed at least in part, sadly this has not materialised.

### **Northern's proposals:**

Looking at the proposals across the entirety of the South East Network there were very few notable changes in respect of either frequency or start finish times. Much of the service is very much as it is now. This largely reflects the Franchise Train Service Requirement, which was, itself, very disappointing and lacking in ambition. This lack of ambition has recently been acknowledged, to a degree by TfGM who have commissioned a South East Quadrant service review, looking beyond the 2018 proposals. Nevertheless when the Franchise TSR was published and its lack of ambition was raised the CRP was assured that the TSR was a baseline rather than a limit on service provision. Looking at the proposals it appears that in very many locations the TSR is indeed the limit and in a number of locations the proposals have failed to reach the basic TSR requirement.

Conversations with Northern have indicated that where proposals have not met TSR requirements that this was an error and would be addressed in follow up proposals, however this still leaves the TSR as being deemed to be adequate, whereas a number



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of busy stations currently have service levels above the TSR, as timetables have evolved in response to customer demand.

Looking at lines and their specific issues the CRP makes the following Observations:

### **Hazel Grove / Middlewood to Manchester:**

Services out of Manchester beyond Middlewood Station are covered by the High Peak and Hope Valley CRP and I will leave them to comment on services at the Buxton end of the line.

*Middlewood Station:* This is a remote station which nevertheless attracts a number of commuters from nearby Poynton and High Lane, it's off peak two hourly service frequency is inadequate and could be usefully enhanced by the provision of a request stop to enable leisure visitors to access the area. It is noted that the TSR for inbound weekday services between 07:00 and 09:59 is for five services, and the inbound TSR for the 22:00 – 0159 is for two services the current offers are three and one respectively. We expect to see the TSR met on these services as a minimum but would ask that serious consideration be given to providing a really useful service through the day.

*Woodsmoor and Davenport Stations:* The proposed service provision for these two stations is the most problematic on the SEM network. The latest ORR figures show that these two popular stations have a combined total footfall of well over 500k / annum. The stations are also key destinations for people travelling to Stepping Hill Hospital, Aquinas College, Stockport School and Stockport Grammar School. Aquinas College currently has over 140 students with a Derbyshire address. A response from Aquinas College is attached as *Appendix (01)*.

*Peak inbound (to Manchester):* Services are heavily over-subscribed and passengers are often required to stand in crowded conditions for the entire journey into Manchester. Northern's initial proposal of below TSR was, we are now informed, an error and we await a further indication of the proposed service level. As stated above the current above TSR peak service often struggles to cope with the numbers of commuters so any diminution of service would not be acceptable and contrary to the much quoted 'transformational' Franchise Arriva Northern promised when winning the Franchise.

*Inbound off peak:* It's disappointing to note that the uneven calling pattern inbound against outbound that has long afflicted Heaton Chapel and Levenshulme - Buxton has now been extended to Woodsmoor and Davenport. Travel to Buxton from these stations is relatively frequent but return journeys are very fragmented and makes the legibility of the timetable very poor for infrequent travellers, who might assume that if a journey from A-B is direct the journey from B-A would be the same and would not involve



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changing trains and lengthy and inconvenient changeovers. This imbalance is particularly problematic for visitors from the Peak District to Stepping Hill Hospital who will have to interchange at Hazel Grove to access Woodsmoor Station, the nearest pedestrian accessible station. For example a journey to Stepping Hill; departing Buxton at 09:00, arrives at Hazel Grove at 09:37, departs Hazel Grove again at 10:10 arrives at Woodsmoor at 10:13. A 73 minute journey including a thirty three minute stops over to complete the last three minutes of the journey! The equivalent journey today would be; depart Buxton at either 08:26 or 09:27 and arrive at Woodsmoor directly at 09:05 or 10:03 respectively, approximately 40 minute journeys.

*Through services:* The current service offered by Northern offers a number of trains that travel through Piccadilly to Oxford Road, Deansgate and beyond, currently five services in the morning peak are through services. The 2018 proposals offer no such service. This proposal is unacceptable; many residents in the Woodsmoor and Davenport area are employed in the University and Media sectors located north of the city centre. The loss of a direct service will have major implications for many people, journey times will be much longer than they are currently and this will require additional child care arrangements to be made as parents will have to find care for children that can't be dropped off at school due to their earlier travel times. Removing a through service that has existed for many years and adding a through service to another line gives the impression that Northern has completely lost sight of its customer base. A number of emails from residents who would be affected by this are attached in *appendix (06)*.

*Outbound services (from Manchester):* In general the 2018 service proposals are broadly similar to those that are currently experienced and that is welcome, as is a slight increase in early and late evening services.

*Weekend services:* Comments relating to Saturdays are very much in line with the weekday comments. The unevenness of in / out bound services is particularly problematic for leisure travellers returning from the Peak District, the same interchange and timetable fragmentation issues highlighted for Stepping Hill apply here as well.

*Customer impact:* Such has been the concern over the timetable proposals for Davenport and Woodsmoor, Friends of Woodsmoor carried out a customer survey of peak time travellers. The results of that survey and the group's observations are attached as *appendix (02a)*. Friends of Davenport also consulted with residents and provided a response *appendix (02b)*. The general concerns expressed range from greatly increased crowding on services and the risk of being left behind at the station due to overcrowding, through to increased journey times to the north of Manchester, to others who would find the cost of increased child care making working marginal and possibly not worth it and others who would have to consider relocating their home to an area better served by public transport.



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*Hazel Grove Station:* This is an important and very busy station, with a large natural catchment area and park and ride facility it provides a gateway for many commuters and resident to the south of Stockport ORR estimate the total footfall to be well over 600k / annum.

The main proposals for Hazel grove represent a notable increase in service and this is very welcome, however a number of the proposals for Hazel Grove indicate that many services, inbound and outbound, from 07:00 to 19:00 fall below the TSR. It is assumed that this is a part of the same error that resulted in the schedule for Woodsmoor and Davenport and that it will be rectified in the same manner.

The other issue of major concern is again the loss of the five morning peak through services beyond Manchester Piccadilly; this will be of great concern to many travellers and is of great concern to Stockport Council who fears the possible impact upon traffic levels through the town centre. The park and ride concept could be seriously undermined by the lack of through services.

The Goyt Valley Rail User Group has compiled a formal response to the consultation and this is attached as appendix (03). I have captured a few of their main comments below.

### **New Mills via Bredbury services:**

In brief, the group welcomes the general direction of the service provision, in particular the increase in off peak services; one of the main concerns over current service provision is that of train capacity. The provision of carriages on this route is somewhat inconsistent; this often results in acute overcrowding. The apparent merging of two early services is very likely to compound this issue as both services are currently heavily used; this service is also scheduled to make stops at Bredbury which will compound the overcrowding further. The problem of trains from Sheffield being routinely short formed is also raised as a persistent problem that requires addressing.

Concern is raised of the alternate skip stopping of Strines and Belle Vue, it is pointed out that the saving on timetable timing really does not make skip stopping these stations worthwhile. I would also add that the Strines area has seen substantial housing development, additionally there is a major employer in the area a market research company that employs a lot of young staff that travel in from the urban centre. The current service is not really adequate, which often results in people travelling beyond Strines on a skipping service and interchanging at New Mills to return to Strines from the opposite direction.

There is also concern in relation to the early and late services; early services are not sufficiently early enough to enable interchange with regional and national services at a



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sufficiently early time for convenient business travel. The general increase in evening services is welcomed, however the penultimate train out of Manchester is scheduled to be too early for many users to use and this is likely to result in passenger shift to the last service out of Manchester, a service that is already very overcrowded on Friday and Saturdays.

### **Rose Hill via Hyde Services:**

The group welcomes the move to a service closer to a half hourly service and hopes that in the future, scheduling constraints can be overcome to provide a fully clock face half hourly service.

Again the issue of skip stopping is raised, many services skip Fairfield or Hyde North. The total time saved by these skips is around two minutes and does not appear to justify the complexity and inconsistency skip stopping brings to the timetable. We would ask that this policy be reviewed.

The group is disappointed to note that little progress has been made on extending the operating day along this route and the continued failure to provide any sort of Sunday service. The lack of Sunday service inhibits both the potential growth of leisure travel and restricts the working opportunities of many communities along the line, some of which are the most disadvantaged in Greater Manchester. Similarly the lack of an evening service restricts access to the central night time economy; both in terms of working opportunities and leisure.

The current two hour gap in the evening services from Manchester Piccadilly to Fairfield station between 18:44 and the last service at the station at 20:44 has been filled with a service at 19:48 but, this has been at the expense of the 20:44 service with the last train from Piccadilly now being an hour earlier at 19:48. This is an hour and a half before the final train from Piccadilly passes through without stopping at about 21:16. Northern should make every attempt to try and resolve this issue as the station is located near to recent major housing developments. Perhaps evening services at Fairfield could be provided by the Glossop line services. Friends of Rose Hill have submitted a formal response *appendix (04)*.

### **Glossop / Hadfield Service:**

The proposals for this line have drawn few comments; there is broad support for the 2018 timetable. There is some concern that the second early train out of Hadfield is some ten minutes later than the current offer. There is a likelihood that a number of travellers will have to move to the earlier service in order to make connections, this could create crowding problems further down the line. It is also noted that the early morning offer of one service between 02:00 and 06:59 is one short of the TSR requirement of two services. This shortfall could be addressed by moving the second service to an earlier slot.



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An issue that has been raised previously is the strong familial connections between Gorton and Hattersley, for some years these two stations have been on separate service diagrams. We would ask that consideration be given to some off peak services being provided between these two locations. Tameside metropolitan Borough Council have provided a response, *appendix (05)*.

### **Conclusion:**

It is somewhat disappointing that so much of the consultation process has been overshadowed by the release of documents that, it appears, were not checked for accuracy. As I hope is clear from the above comments and the attached documents there is a great deal of concern over the Buxton line proposals, the proposals even if brought up to TSR will still leave a very busy area with a service that is substantially poorer than what is offered now and for many people will no longer represent a viable means of getting to their place of employment.

The implications of the proposals, for both local residents that use the current service and more broadly for Stockport in general are very concerning.

The broad view of the timetable proposals is that although they are by and large in the right direction, they represent a very small step in that direction. It is understood that network limitations and potential rolling stock cascade, or lack of them, may have limited Northern's ambition it is hoped that future timetable developments will take us further towards the transformational service spoken of at the start of this Franchise.

## Appendix 1



Principal Danny Pearson BA (Hons)

To whom it may concern

I am writing as the Principal of Aquinas College to protest against the proposed changes to the Arriva Rail North service between Manchester and Buxton and in particular how they affect students using the Woodsmoor and Davenport stations.

This service is used by many students attending college on the route, particularly those from Buxton through other stops in Derbyshire and more locally. Students from Buxton and the surrounding areas face a long and slow commute if they were to try and come via surface roads. Indeed without the service many students would be faced with a much more difficult decision about pursuing their education once leaving school. We have a Catholic feeder school in Buxton with over 50% of their year 11 regularly choosing Aquinas as their college of choice because of the breadth and quality of curriculum on offer. The fact that they are prepared to travel the 18 plus miles to college says something about their commitment but being faced with a long slow bus journey may well test their resolve.

This is clearly a busy and popular route which I would suggest has grown more popular in recent years. Indeed if there were any changes needed then I believe there would be a clear need for services to be increased and improved rather than cut. Students tell me the services are already very crowded at busy times and can't understand why there isn't an additional carriage. The demand is clearly there. The frequency of trains is clearly an important factor with students being tied to start and finish times as I am sure it is with all those using the service to commute to work. This is clearly most important at peak times and I would urge Arriva North to reconsider these changes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danny Pearson".

Danny Pearson  
Principal



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### NORTHERN RAIL MAY 2018 TIMETABLE CONSULTATION

We are writing to you on behalf of the 'Woodsmoor Station Friends' regarding the consultation exercise being carried out by Northern Rail in respect to its proposed May 2018 timetable changes.

Specifically, we are very concerned at the changes being proposed to the Buxton Line timetable which would result in a marked deterioration in the level of service provided at Davenport and Woodsmoor stations which would be detrimental to local residents due to:

- A 40% reduction in the number of trains in the morning peak period;
- Uneven timing and spacing of services;
- The daytime pattern of service in either direction not matching, meaning that it would be possible to travel directly to stations such as Buxton but not make the corresponding return journey without having to change in Hazel Grove; and
- The proposal to terminate all services at Piccadilly and the impact on those who go through to Oxford Road/ Deansgate/ Salford/ Bolton and beyond

Annex 1 provides a detailed appraisal of the proposal whilst the following sections provide local context and aim to demonstrate the importance of local rail services to the communities served by these stations as well as the contribution made to strategic objectives at a Greater Manchester level.

Woodsmoor Station was opened by Greater Manchester PTE in 1990 with the key aim of improving rail access to Stepping Hill Hospital although in the subsequent years, the station has developed to be a key transport facility in the locality. In the immediate area it serves the substantial suburban communities of Woodsmoor, Stepping Hill and Great Moor whilst it is also within walking distance of parts of Offerton and Mile End which are not in proximity to any other station. The station is also used by those visiting or working at Stepping Hill Hospital as well as pupils and staff attending Stockport Grammar School and Stockport School.

Davenport Station is longer established and serves Davenport Village and parts of Heaviley and neighbouring parts of Bramhall Park. As with Woodsmoor Station, some of the communities served are a considerable distance from other stations and Davenport Station is therefore key in providing access



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to the rail network from a large swathe of suburban housing as well as providing access for students of Aquinas College.

As with the majority of areas, a number of sizeable residential developments have been completed with others coming forward including the new developments of about 400 houses on the former MAN Diesel site between Woods Moor Station and Bramhall Moor Lane. Similarly, within Great Moor, the former site of Cherry Tree Hospital is currently being developed with further housing having recently been completed on the southern edge of Offerton. Therefore, demand for travel, including rail travel can only increase within these areas and it is therefore essential that this can be accommodated sustainably.

The majority of passengers using both stations arrive on foot and only Davenport has a modest sized car park which is not particularly well used. The nearest alternative station to Davenport is Stockport with Hazel Grove being closest to Woods Moor and, whilst a very small proportion of users would be able to walk to the alternatives, the distances and time involved would be too great for many, particularly in inclement weather conditions. In addition, there are poor walking routes from Woods Moor to Hazel Grove station due to the severance caused by the railway lines, Stepping Hill Hospital and large industrial premises in the area.

Although there is a sizeable Park & Ride site at Hazel Grove station, in order to access it, many of those who currently use Woods Moor Station would need to travel in the opposite direction which would also be unattractive due to the time taken and cost incurred. There is also parking available at Stockport Station although this is aimed for the longer distance market and charged at around £15 per day which would be prohibitively expensive for most users. From a strategic perspective, it cannot be desirable to encourage an increase in traffic volumes on roads in the area, particularly in the context of the Manchester Airport Relief Road and other associated investment which is being delivered to reduce traffic volumes on the A6 which is subject to high levels of peak period congestion and poor air quality.

The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 sets a number of *“critical transport challenges for Greater Manchester”* which recognise the importance of an efficient, customer-focussed and attractive transport system in achieving key strategic objectives. These include:

- **“Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth”** – through the promotion of an integrated and sustainable transport system which meets customers’ needs, thereby providing access to skills and markets and achieving sustained economic growth;



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- **“Improving the Quality of Life”** – ensuring that residents are able to access employment and training, education, healthcare and other key facilities, also making use of services in the southbound direction; and
- **“Protecting the Environment”** – increasing the use of sustainable transport to reduce the impacts of car use, including harmful emissions.

These principles are also reflected in the wider policy framework including the “Draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework”, “Greater Manchester Rail Policy” and “Greater Manchester Air Quality Action Plan 2016-2021”.

From this brief review of policy documents, the importance of the local transport network as an enabler for the future growth, development and prosperity of Greater Manchester is abundantly clear and the vision of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority is to be commended. It is therefore disappointing and surprising to be facing the prospect of significant service reductions at Davenport and Woodsmoor stations which is in direct conflict with policy objectives and can only serve to undermine progress made in recent years whilst inflicting hardship and inconvenience on hard-working residents of the affected areas.

‘Woodsmoor Station Friends’ and the ‘Friends of Davenport Station’ are fully committed to the future growth and development of the rail system in Greater Manchester and recognise its value in achieving social, economic and environmental objectives. Consequently, we are pleased to spend our own time and energy improving station facilities and raising the profile of rail services within local communities.

Whilst we appreciate the complexity involved in developing rail timetables and the conflicting pressures involved, we feel that the proposed timetable for the Buxton Line falls significantly short of the level of service required to accommodate existing and future demand on this busy corridor. In light of the points we have made above, we would urge Northern Rail to reconsider its proposals.

In conclusion, we would greatly appreciate any assistance you are able to offer in encouraging Northern Rail to reconsider these proposals. Should you have any queries or require further information at this stage, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Stobbie



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Chairman

Woodsmoor Station Friends

### Annex 1: Detailed comments on the May 2018 proposed timetable

#### 1. Morning peak period services into Manchester Piccadilly

The impact of the proposed changes is most pronounced during the morning peak period for journeys towards Manchester City Centre which is obviously when the majority of journeys-to-work trips are made. The tables below summarise the current and proposed journeys between 0630 and 1000:

##### Current timetable (May 2017)

Woodsmoor	0638	0652	0702	0725	0730	0753	0804	0838	0905	0938
Davenport	0640	0654	0704	0727	0733	0755	0806	0840	0908	0941
Manchester Piccadilly	0659	0711	0725	0745	0750	0810	0825	0900	0926	0958

##### Proposed timetable (May 2018)

Woodsmoor	0627	0713	0727	0813	0827	0927
Davenport	0629	0715	0730	0815	0830	0930
Manchester Piccadilly	0653	0736	0754	0831	0852	0954

These proposals are a cause for concern for the following reasons:

- There is a significant reduction (around 40%) proposed in the number of trains from both Woodsmoor and Davenport stations into Manchester City Centre during the morning peak period. Both stations are heavily used by commuters travelling to Manchester City Centre and footfall has increased steadily in recent years such that the 2015/16 total entries and exits at Davenport was 285,066 (274,848 in 2014/15) and 232,954 for Woodsmoor (219,366 in 2014/15). Considered in the context of other stations in Greater Manchester, both stations are in the top-50 for footfall, even allowing for the busiest station in Manchester City Centre and the district centres. Even with the current level of provision, trains are often extremely busy resulting in passengers boarding at Davenport and Woodsmoor having to stand and we would foresee the proposed service level being unable to accommodate passenger demand. There is a significant amount of additional residential development proposed in the area, including 4,000 new dwellings in High Lane which would add further pressure to services.
- The proposed timing and spacing of journeys is unhelpful. On the current timetable, the 0753 and 0804 departures from Woodsmoor (0755 and 0806 from Davenport) arrive in Manchester Piccadilly at 0810 and 0825 and therefore allow sufficient time for passengers



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to make the last leg of their journey to their final workplace destinations which might be parts of the Regional Centre some distance away from Piccadilly such as Castlefield, Spinningfields or Salford Quays. Under the proposals, passengers would have the options of arriving 30 minutes too early or too late. It is also notable that the proposals do not include a departure into Manchester Piccadilly between 0829 and 0929 which further reduces the attractiveness of the service and severely limits its utility value, particularly for those who may work flexible hours or start work later due to other commitments. The *'Greater Manchester Rail Policy 2012-2024'* published by Transport for Greater Manchester recommends that stations with between 50,000 and 500,000 trips per annum should benefit from a minimum all-day frequency of two trains per hour and is disappointing that the guidance has not been followed in this instance.

- It is unclear to what extent the impact on particular user groups has been considered. For example, the 0724 Monday to Friday departure from Buxton is used by approximately 50 school children and staff who disembark at Woodsmoor at 0804 and walk to Stockport Grammar school and Stockport School. A large number of FE College students also use this journey and disembark at Davenport station whilst it is of note that Hulme Hall Grammar school is moving to the site of the former Hillcrest Grammar School, within a short walking distance of the station. Secondly, Woodsmoor Station provides access to Stepping Hill Hospital and the proposed reductions in service can only make it more difficult for employees, outpatients and those wishing to visit friends or relatives.

### 2. Interpeak service pattern

There are two specific concerns with the proposed interpeak service:

- The pattern of service in either direction does not match. For journeys from Manchester Piccadilly, Woodsmoor would be served by the journeys terminating in Buxton and the short workings to Hazel Grove, whilst in the opposite direction, Woodsmoor would be served by the short workings from New Mills Newtown and Hazel Grove. In practice, this means that it would be possible to travel directly from Woodsmoor to stations beyond New Mills Newtown but not make the equivalent journeys in the other direction which is inherently confusing from a user perspective. It would also mean that those wishing to reach Stepping Hill Hospital from areas between New Mills and Buxton would need to change at Hazel Grove and wait approximately 30 minutes for the next train to Woodsmoor.
- The spacing of journeys serving Woodsmoor in either direction is very uneven with journeys towards Manchester Piccadilly at xx13 and xx27 and return journeys at xx24 and xx46 from Manchester Piccadilly. Therefore, whilst two trains are being provided within each hour, the proposed spacing, particularly towards Manchester Piccadilly significantly diminishes the value of the service for users.

In addition, the 0938 service moving to 0927 means passengers will have to buy a peak ticket rather than off peak for that service.

### 3. Afternoon peak services from Manchester Piccadilly



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In comparison with the proposed morning peak period service into Manchester Piccadilly, the proposed afternoon peak service is slightly better. However, it is notable that the short journeys to Hazel Grove at 1658 and 1723 have been withdrawn. Although there would still be trains to Buxton at 1646 and 1724 which would call at Woodsmoor, the existing services are very well used and usually carry standing passengers. It is therefore difficult to see how the number of passengers could be accommodated with two fewer trains without causing unacceptable overcrowding and/ or leaving passengers behind. It is also notable that the substitution of two car units on the existing services is not unusual which raises safety concerns with passengers.

### 4. Survey findings

Peak time Passengers were surveyed at Woodsmoor Station on 23 and 24 May to confirm the number of users and ascertain the potential impact from the proposed changes. The passenger count tallied with data collected by TfGM, from 0630 to 0938 there were 275 passengers, of which 184 passengers were counted during the peak period 0730-0930. Passengers were asked what changes they would make to their journeys if the proposals were implemented:

Travel on Another Train from Woodsmoor	111	73%
Travel by Bus	11	7%
Drive	16	11%
Would not make journey	3	2%
Other	2	1%
Would use another Station	9	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	100%

26% of passenger journeys continued on beyond Piccadilly notably to Oxford Road, Deansgate and Salford Crescent



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### 5. Comments from survey

The survey we ran attracted over 100 comments. Here are some of the key ones:

Would not be able to get to work on time - ridiculously early or late. Driving would cost too much. Woodsmoor is an essential station for commuters to Manchester and needs investment.

The train from Woodsmoor is already extremely crowded with more and more people getting the train from this station daily. The service needs improvement and more trains not fewer trains. It is absurd that Northern would be wanting to reduce the service. We are already struggling. Do not reduce the timetable - it is totally ridiculous

Low frequency of trains around 8:30 - 9:30 is going to make childcare arrangements much more complicated for our family.

7.27 too early to take children to breakfast club. 8.13 too late to get to work for 8.30

The frequency of the current trains is required, as due to cancellations and delays it is often required that you get an alternative train and these are already overcrowded.

Need more trains and not less. Overcrowding is a big issue to the extent that trains are becoming unsafe. Two carriages at peak times is completely inadequate for the number of passengers.

The 07.13 would not arrive at Stockport in time for my connecting train to Altrincham. I potentially would have to wait at Stockport for 1 hour!

Woodsmoor is a vital bloodline for the local community. The effect it would have on the Hospital is very detrimental when parking is already at a minimum. V.V. detrimental.

This proposal removes the most popular trains for commuters into Manchester. It would delay me getting into work and does not fit with nursery drop off times for my child

Why are the trains being cancelled? There needs to be more trains not less. People need to use the trains more in order to reduce road traffic congestion and carbon emissions. This is not a sustainable decision!

Without the 6.52 I would not get to work

The 9.05 is the best train for me, enabling me to arrive just before 9.30. Catching an earlier train would mean I would arrive too early.

Reinstate 7.50 service. I cannot drop my son off at 7.30 and get to Manchester before 8.30 with the changes

As I catch the first service I can't catch an earlier train. Ox Rd is central for lots of commuters. Picc can add an extra 20 mins walking distance if you work on the Ox Rd corridor. All the early services are full when they arrive at Woodsmoor - 3 or 4 carriages are required, not 2! Oxford Rd station is too small but if all services terminate at Picc that will need major expansion as it now is struggling to cope during peak hours.

I would have to ask work to completely change my working hours as I work 8.30 - 4.30 to fit around childcare /school. It could mean I have to work extra 1/2 hour every day (2 hours/wk) for no extra pay. A longer day.



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No through trains to Salford Crescent will greatly affect my journeys to and from work adding considerable time and inconvenience to my travel

This seems like a step backwards - trains are already very overcrowded - Woodsmoor and Davenport stations are busier than they have ever been. We need more trains - not less!

The current 7.53 and 8.04 services are already packed on a daily basis. The proposed changes are ridiculous. No train between 7.27 and 8.13 is madness when people need to get to work for 9am. Many cannot drop their children off before 7.45. We pay c.£1k per annum for a substandard service as it is - 40% cut in peak time trains is an insult

When the franchise was taken over there was lots of news about increased capacity, more frequent trains etc. I don't see how this is going to make people's journeys easier on a line that seems to be getting increasingly overcrowded

This would be a change from off-peak to peak! We need an off-peak train shortly after 9.30. we need through trains to Salford Crescent

The 45 min gap is disgraceful - people need to get to work between traditional 8 or 9am hours. I find the proposals unacceptable, services to Davenport and Woodsmoor to all stations is critical to myself and users that won't be represented ie. School children @ Stockport Grammar and students that alight at Davenport

Trains are currently very overcrowded. Reducing service seems outrageous when there is an agenda to get people off the roads and onto public transport. For many people if the journey becomes longer or more overcrowded they will drive instead

I get the train at different times on different days, depending on my working pattern, and they are always busy right the way through to Oxford Road and beyond. The idea of these proposed changes are unpopular and make no sense. It will force many to drive into Manchester.

From looking at the proposed timetable for May 18 there appears to be little logic or thought gone into it. It makes no sense to reduce train times during the rush hour period. The decision to put forward this timetable clearly hasn't been done in consultation with commuters. We are trying to encourage the use of public transport, especially trains to improve congestion as well as the environment. It is an essential public service, not only for commuters but people within communities. By reducing train services, people will struggle to get to work or to Stepping Hill Hospital. Please reconsider your decision.

## Appendix 2b Friends of Davenport Station

### FRIENDS OF DAVENPORT STATION RESPONSE TO THE MAY 2018 TIMETABLE CONSULTATION

Compiled by Charlie Hulme ([info@davenportstation.org.uk](mailto:info@davenportstation.org.uk)) May 2017. Final version  
As a group dedicated to increasing the use of rail in our area, we are most disappointed, and indeed appalled, to see the proposed May 2018 timetable. Despite all the positive publicity for the new Northern Franchise and its many claimed improvements ("37% increase in peak time capacity") passengers using Davenport and Woodsmoor stations face a weekday train service which is inferior in almost all respects to that we have been accustomed to for many years.

There are no peak-time extra services; there are irregular intervals between trains; skipping of stops destroys many journey opportunities; and all through workings beyond Manchester Piccadilly have been removed.

This is despite the fact that there will be three Northern trains per hour on our line instead of two. Missing the busy stations at Davenport and Woodsmoor to gain a few minutes of journey time from Buxton to Manchester is, in our view, very misguided. Many people have chosen to live and/or work in our area because of the good train service, and will be seriously inconvenienced by the proposed changes, in ways outlined below.

Andy Stobbie of Woodsmoor Friends Group has prepared an extract from the Consultation timetable showing our stations, which can be found at <http://www.davenportstation.org.uk/Timetable-extract-WSR-DAV-170517.pdf>  
We and our respondents believe strongly that most trains should serve all stations on the Stockport – Buxton line, which has many more uses than simply commuting to Manchester, and that additional stopping trains between Hazel Grove, Piccadilly, Deansgate and Salford Crescent are required in the peak periods. Any time savings that are considered necessary should follow infrastructure improvements.

Times quoted are for Davenport; station. For Woodsmoor add or subtract three minutes. Peak-time service The consultation timetable is based on a simple pattern of two trains per hour, with a one-hour gap at the end of the morning peak, reducing to hourly in the late evening. There are no additional trains for commuters to Manchester either in the morning or evening peaks ('peak' defined as times when off-peak tickets are not valid). Currently there are nine trains before 09:30, at 06:40, 06:55, 07:04, 07:27, 07:33, 07:55, 08:06, 08:40, 09:08.

Proposed service has just six - 06:29, 07:15, 07:29, 08:15, 08:29, 09:29. The 07:15 and 08:15 originate from Buxton and are likely, even if formed of the maximum of four carriages allowed by station platforms, to be too crowded to board by the time Davenport is reached.

In the evening peak, the service is already inadequate, with only one train additional to the pattern – from Piccadilly at 16:21, 16:49, 16:58, 17:23, 17:40, 18:21.

The proposed service has 16:24, 16:46, 17:24, 17:46 and 18:24.

Irregular headways Currently there is a pattern of train service from Davenport to Manchester of two trains per hour, with departures at approximately even intervals: xx.08 and xx.41. This is to be replaced by two trains less than 15 minutes apart at xx.15 and xx.29 followed by a long gap. This is clearly much less satisfactory than an even interval, especially if the xx.29 train is cancelled.

## Appendix 2b Friends of Davenport Station

Northern have told us that this is due to pathing issues at Edgeley Junction; however it is noticeable that if the trains from Buxton were to call, the pattern at Woodsmoor and Davenport, would be much more satisfactory.

### Skipping of stops

The Department for Transport's requirements for the franchise are specified by the number of trains arriving at Manchester from each station, and a requirement that some trains have shorter journey time for Buxton passengers. Northern's timetable planners have interpreted this in a manner which ignores the needs of people travelling between intermediate stations on the Buxton line or between intermediate stations and the market town the town of Buxton.

What is proposed is an hourly service from Davenport to Buxton, but in the return direction only five trains from Buxton (06:33, 07:33, 16:36, 17:35 and 22:58), call at Davenport and Woodsmoor, with a very long connection time at Hazel Grove from others. For visitors to the rural attractions of Middlewood and Disley the situation is even worse. These stations are only accessible direct by the 07:07, 09:07, 18:07 (not Middlewood) and 19:07 trains from Davenport.

A change at Hazel Grove on other trains enforces a 16-minute wait there.

This policy is turning away revenue on lightly-used off-peak services. More importantly, Davenport and Woodsmoor are destinations for people travelling from the High Peak. Many students attending Stockport Grammar School, Aquinas College, and Hillcrest School (which will be opening again in September as Hulme Hall School) use the train. A spot check at Davenport on 25 May found 20 people, mostly home-bound students, boarding the 15:49 Manchester – Buxton (Davenport 16:05). All these will, of course, have travelled down in the morning, and sometimes may wish to arrive and depart at other times of day.

Stepping Hill Hospital, served by Woodsmoor station and with chronic car parking problems, is the designated hospital for all the towns on the Buxton line; staff, visitors and outpatients use the trains. Loss of through trains beyond Piccadilly

The consultation timetable shows all weekday trains from the Buxton and Hazel Grove area terminating at Manchester Piccadilly in contrast to the existing timetable, which offers direct links on about 50% of trains through Piccadilly to Manchester Oxford Road and beyond. Someone has decided to transfer this useful facility to the Macclesfield line, and arrange things so that a simple connection at Stockport is not possible, as the train from Macclesfield departs there a few minutes before the train from Davenport arrives. The many passengers who travel to the Universities on Oxford Road and at Salford Crescent, and those who take advantage of the easy connection at Deansgate with Metrolink, will be forced to make a time-wasting, and probably unreliable, change at Piccadilly involving the journey over the footbridge. As mentioned above, many people have chosen to live near the Buxton line because of its longstanding through link. Some extracts from emails from respondents:

“I object strongly to the reduced service. I often travel on the 07.53 or the 08.04, this will have a huge impact on my daily routine, it will also have a huge impact on my child care.” “I travel weekly from Woodsmoor to Oxford Road and would be greatly inconvenienced if the proposals are accurate and implemented. I currently catch the 06:52 from Woodsmoor to get to work. Although I occasionally catch the 06.38, it really

## Appendix 2b Friends of Davenport Station

is too early for me although a service which stops at Oxford Road. The two new proposed times of 06.26 and 07.12 are either too early or late. I have been travelling by train now for some years and have very recently seen a sharp increase to the number of commuters using both Woodsmoor and Davenport Stations, during this time period and in my experience there are good numbers using the three services that will change under the proposal. (06.38, 06.52 and 07.02)”

“I use the train to start work at 8.30 a.m. and travel daily from Woodsmoor to Manchester. I currently have the option of two trains 7.53 or 8.04 but the proposed 2018 timetable leaves me only one option at 7.27. This is almost half an hour earlier than I would wish to travel with no later option that would get me to work on time. This is a greatly reduced level of service provision for which I am sure there will be no corresponding reduction in fare.” “My wife and I often use the train, sometimes with our bikes, to visit the Middlewood Way and Lyme Park. This facility is one of the best things for us about Davenport, and the proposals make leisure journeys much more difficult.” “I am contacting you regarding the proposed changes in frequency of trains from Davenport to Manchester and also the change in route (not running to Oxford Road etc.). This will cause me a lot of problems as I work in Manchester and to be honest was one of the main reasons behind me buying my house where I have done. Do you have the detail/guidance of where I can escalate my concerns or are you aware of any petitions which I can sign?”

“I'm very concerned about this and would be severely affected, so want to voice my concerns directly as I want to know what surveys they have conducted about the use of both Davenport and Woodsmoor (they clearly haven't performed any and I don't feel that they've considered all users of the Buxton line). In addition personally it doesn't suit my working times, not all people can start work at 8am or 9am.....this isn't the 1950s!”

“Just to add my voice to the probably obvious dispute in relation to the reduced timetable at Davenport Station which is already poor. Also the trains are ancient and severely overcrowded, particularly at 7:55 / 8:06 every morning, so reducing the trains at morning commuter times will only make this even worse.”

"Suffering from a rare type of chronic auto inflammatory arthritis I rely on the services of Stockport NHS Foundation Trust at Stepping Hill Hospital on a monthly basis. Due to a combination of being left unable to drive as a result of the condition and also car parking issues I have to rely on train service to Woodsmoor station sometimes at very short notice to attend the hospital just to meet my every day needs. These proposals genuinely concern me and could impact on my ability to maintain my everyday life."

"I deliberately bought a house in 2012 that was close to Woodsmoor Station precisely so that I could avoid adding to road congestion and driving in to Manchester. I work at the University so the ability to travel to Oxford Road is important to me. I see every day the numbers of people who use both Davenport and Woodsmoor stations (I vary the trains I get between the 0755 and 0806 and I rarely get a seat on either) and the same applies coming home in the evening on either the 1723 or 1749."

"Davenport is a very busy station in the morning and it is often hard to find seats on the peak trains. As such, any reduction to these services would be extremely disappointing, especially at a time when the government should be encouraging greater use of public transport due to concerns over vehicle emissions on the roads."

"I should like to express my dismay on hearing this news, as I travel into Manchester every day. This experience is not generally a good one, with overcrowded trains and frequent delays and cancellations. To cut the number of trains at peak times will only

## Appendix 2b Friends of Davenport Station

exacerbate these problems, and with fares rising year on year, consumers are not receiving value for money."

"To get to a city centre office for 9, the 7.55 and 8.06 services are essential. Given the 7.55 is usually full such that I often have to not get on and take the 8.06, I cannot believe there is any public service let alone commercial rationale for removing both and replacing them with a single, later train at 8.13 which will not allow me to get to the Spinningfields before 9am." "It seems ridiculous that in the proposed timings the off-peak trains from Buxton, which miss Woodsmoor and Davenport, call at Hazel Grove after the all-stations stopping train from Hazel Grove to Manchester has left, and then catch it up, arriving at Piccadilly just two minutes after the stopping train has arrived there." "Davenport station serves a number of educational establishments including Aquinas College and Stockport Grammar. Aquinas in particular provides catholic sixth form provision for the Buxton area so this rail line is an important transport route from its core catchment area to Davenport. Hulme Hall School is about to move into the old Hillcrest site on Beech Road. As private schools tend to draw their pupils from a wider area than state ones we need more public transport, not less. The Buxton to Manchester rail line follows the route of the A6 which is a very congested and polluted route which is totally unsuitable to take more traffic displaced from an inadequate train service." "Why can't we keep the present timetable?"

## **Northern Railway's May 2018 Timetable Consultation**

### **Comments from *Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association***

#### **1. Introduction**

Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association (GVRUA) was formed in 1993 to campaign for better train services on the routes from Manchester to New Mills, Marple and Rose Hill via Bredbury and Hyde. We are grateful for this opportunity to comment on Northern Railway's May 2018 timetable proposals for these routes and we appreciate being given sufficient time to do this in a considered and constructive way.

In our comments below, we set out a series of issues and concerns relating to the proposed timetable. We recognise that some of these go beyond Northern's current franchise commitments, but we consider that they are required to provide a reasonable standard of suburban service. If Northern is unwilling to provide these at its own risk, we look forward to working with you to put forward a robust business case to Rail North and the Department for Transport. In any case, our longer term vision is for much higher frequency (at least every 15 minutes on each route) and new rolling stock in order to drive a transformation in the role played by rail in meeting the travel needs of the Goyt Valley corridor.

Apart from the shortcomings of the existing timetable, one of the weaknesses of the current service is inconsistency in train capacity. Some of the busiest trains, such as the 07.12 Sheffield to Manchester and 17.49 Manchester – Sheffield, are regularly formed of a single 2 car set, while other services are often short formed at the last minute. This is a major source of customer dissatisfaction, which needs to be addressed by providing a capacity at least equal to a 4 car Pacer train on all services. At this stage, we have not been provided with any information about proposed train capacity so cannot comment in detail on potential shortfalls. However, we do highlight instances where we consider capacity problems are likely to occur.

After this Introduction, we set out our comments on the New Mills via Bredbury route in Section 2 and the Rose Hill via Hyde route in Section 3. Our main concerns are summarised in Section 4.

#### **2. New Mills via Bredbury Route**

##### *Overall Service Pattern*

The proposed service pattern is based around providing an hourly stopping service to New Mills Central and a second hourly service, running semi-fast to New Mills and then calling at all stations to

## Appendix 3 Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association

Sheffield. This is a very welcome improvement on the current evening and Sunday service level and also provides extra services to New Mills on Saturdays and to Hope Valley stations during the weekday inter-peak.

However there are some issues with the detail of the proposals:

1. The New Mills service calls alternately at Strines and Belle Vue giving each station a service every two hours on weekdays. This appears to only save 1 minute relative to calling at all stations. Bizarrely Strines is proposed to have a better Sunday service. Strines station has seen significant growth recently, linked to nearby housing developments and the presence of a market research company near the station, which employs a number of researchers living in Central Manchester. The recent growth could be further stimulated by providing an hourly service. Accordingly we consider that the New Mills service should call hourly at Strines throughout the day. This should include stopping in the outbound direction in the morning peak and inbound direction in the evening peak, to serve employees of the market research company based in Strines.
2. On Monday to Saturday the standard departure times from Manchester Piccadilly are at xx.19 and xx.49, while on Sundays they are at xx.15 and xx.45. It would be preferable if they were at the same times on all days to improve legibility to passengers.
3. A number of Sheffield services on weekdays depart off pattern and run semi-fast through the Hope Valley. We understand that this is due to conflicts with freight train paths. We urge Northern to work with Network Rail and the relevant freight operators to try to resolve these conflicts and enable all services to operate to the standard pattern.

### *Weekday Peak Services*

As today, the timetable proposals include additional services during the Monday to Friday peaks. However, in the morning peak there is one fewer train arriving in Manchester during the peak hour from 07.45 to 08.44. In effect, the current 07.39 New Mills Central – Manchester and 07.59 Marple – Manchester have been combined into a single service leaving New Mills at 07.50. Both the current services are diagrammed as 4 car trains and counts in November 2016 showed 223 passengers boarding these trains at Marple alone. There is therefore a high risk of overcrowding unless an extra service is provided. This is compounded by inserting extra stops at Bredbury, Brinnington and Reddish North on the following 07.14 Sheffield – Manchester service. This train is regularly crush loaded from Romiley and has no capacity to accommodate passengers displaced from the earlier service or wishing to board at the additional stops.

The proposed outbound evening peak service retains the regular interval off peak pattern with the addition of services departing from Manchester Piccadilly at xx.32. This means that there is a half hour gap between the Sheffield departure at xx.49 and the New Mills departure at xx.19 in each hour. Overall there is a reduction of one train in the three hour period from 16.00 to 18.59. We consider that here is a high risk that the 17.19 will be severely crowded and problems are also likely to be experienced on the 18.19 service. We therefore suggest that the 17.05 and 18.02 Marple services should be reinstated to create a more balanced pattern of departures.

### *Early and Late Services*

The current timetable proposals provide a first arrival in Manchester at 06.39 on Monday to Friday and 07.04 on Saturdays. We consider that these should be brought forward to enable passengers to

## Appendix 3 Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association

arrive in London in time for 09.00 appointments on Monday to Friday and to reach a wider range of destinations by 09.00 on Saturdays. This implies a first arrival before 06.00 on Monday – Friday and 06.30 on Saturday. Similarly, the first arrival in Sheffield from Romiley, Marple and New Mills is not until 07.59. This could be brought forward by diverting the 05.46 Manchester – Sheffield service away from its current route via Stockport. We note that there is currently a fast service from Stockport that arrives in Sheffield only 5 minutes behind this train and we think it is implausible that there is significant demand from Stockport to the Hope Valley at this time of day.

The current evening proposals are to provide a very welcome half hourly service until the 22.19 departure from Manchester and then a single later service at 23.24 (22.15 and 23.15 respectively on Sundays). There are two concerns relating to this last service. At present, the 22.49 and 23.24 services load heavily and often experience significant over-crowding on Friday and Saturday nights. This is driven by the finishing times of events including plays, films and concerts. We doubt if a significant proportion of the users of the current 22.49 service would be able to reach the station in time to catch the proposed 22.19 departure. Accordingly there is a high risk that the 23.24 departure will be seriously overcrowded. Secondly, there are a substantial number of potential rail users who choose to drive into Manchester because they are not confident of being able to reach Piccadilly in time for the last train. Accordingly, we suggest that the half hourly pattern is extended until a last departure from Manchester at 23.49. We welcome the improved evening service on the Hope Valley Line, especially the late departure to New Mills, Marple and Romiley at 22.48. This should enable people from the GVRUA area to visit Sheffield for the evening by train, especially with the fallback of the even later departure to Stockport.

### 3. Rose Hill via Hyde Route

GVRUA welcomes the fact that the proposed timetable is much closer to providing a regular half hourly service throughout the day on Monday to Saturday up to 19.14 inbound to Manchester and 20.09 outbound. We appreciate that timetabling constraints may prevent Northern from moving to a strictly half hourly service at present, but we consider that efforts should be made to achieve this as soon as possible.

While some trains call at all stations, the majority either omit Ashburys and Fairfield or Hyde North. Each of these stopping patterns appears to save 2 minutes compared to services which call at all stations. We consider the benefits from including stops at all stations except Ashburys would exceed the disbenefit of extending journey times by up to 2 minutes for longer journeys, given the catchment populations of Fairfield and Hyde North. Accordingly we believe that all services on this route should call at all stations (except Ardwick and Ashburys).

Much bigger issues are the short operating day on Monday to Saturday and the total lack of a Sunday service. This corridor is the only route into Central Manchester without a late evening or Sunday service. The lack of an evening service restricts the utility of the service to people working unsocial hours, those connecting from long distance services and people taking advantage of Manchester's vibrant evening economy. The lack of a Sunday service means that no service is available to retail workers and shoppers or to people making leisure journeys to, from and within the corridor. It is also restricting opportunities to regenerate areas of significant deprivation. Introducing a half hourly day time service grew inter-peak demand at Hyde Central and Woodley by 63% between 2011 and 2014 (TfGM data) showing that there is significant latent demand that could

## Appendix 3 Goyt Valley Rail Users' Association

be captured. Accordingly, GVRUA considers that at least an hourly service should be provided until after 23.30 on weekdays and from 08.30 to 23.30 on Sunday. As a first step, the last evening service from Manchester could run fast back to Piccadilly to form an outbound service at 22.09. This could be repeated to offer a last evening service at around 23.09 providing a late evening service from Manchester.

There would also be benefits in bringing forward the time of the first weekday train by 30 minutes to cater for people starting work early and those connecting on to long distance services in Central Manchester.

### 4. Summary

Northern's May 2018 timetable proposals contain a number of very welcome service improvements. We hope that these will be the first stage in the longer term transformation of the Goyt Valley routes, with much higher service frequencies and new rolling stock. We look forward to working with Northern and other stakeholders to achieve this.

However we have a number of concerns about the current proposals. Without re-stating all the points above, we consider the most significant of these are:

- No service to Hyde and Rose Hill after 21.00 on weekdays, at least an hourly service should be provided;
- No Sunday service on this route, at least an hourly service should be provided;
- Potential crowding on key peak services on the route to and from New Mills, resulting mainly from the removal of a key morning peak service and the distribution of services around the clockface in the evening peak;
- Potential crowding on the proposed last train to New Mills, which could be resolved by extending the half hourly service pattern to a last train after 23.45.

In the absence of any information about the proposed capacity of each service, we also have a broader potential concern about crowding at busy times.

### Friends of Rose Hill Station (FoRHS)

#### Response to Northern Timetable Consultation

##### Background

1. From privatisation until Dec 2010 Rose Hill and the Hyde loop had 1 tph off-peak, 5 trains inbound in the 0700-0900 am peak and 3 trains outbound in the 1700-1900 pm peak.
2. In Dec 2010 an additional 1tph off-peak was diverted to run to/from Rose Hill and in Dec 2012 this train was further diverted to run from Rose Hill via the Hyde loop. At the same time the timings were balanced to give a good daytime, off-peak service. At that time no changes were made to the peak time or evening services.
3. After the 1835 departure from Piccadilly there is only one further train from Manchester, at 2035, which does not constitute a viable evening service.
4. Rose Hill/Hyde loop remains the only service running into central Manchester that lacks an evening or Sunday service.
5. Growth in patronage at Rose Hill, after the introduction of 2 tph off-peak, has been very high (60% in the first 4 years) but with the current, restricted timetable, this corridor is probably approaching the maximum it can achieve without significant improvements in the peak time, evening and Sunday services. FoRHS's own six-monthly passenger counts confirm the limitations on growth that are a result of the deficiencies in the existing services.
6. The pattern of patronage growth and the limitations on future growth at Rose Hill is broadly replicated at the other stations on the Rose Hill/Hyde loop corridor (see figures below), apart from Gorton.

##### Patronage (ORR figures)

	2008/9	2013/14	2015/16
Rose Hill	98k	158k	145k
Woodley	36k	49k	54k
Hyde Central	53k	87k	82k
Hyde North	35k	44k	44k
Fairfield	11k	22k	25k
Gorton	99k	119k	101k

### Friends of Rose Hill Station (FoRHS)

#### FoRHS view of the proposed May 2018 timetable

Below is the FoRHS view of the proposed May 2018 timetable, including the likely effects on other stations on the Rose Hill-Piccadilly corridor (ie Woodley, Hyde Central, Hyde North, Fairfield and Gorton)

1. FoRHS is broadly pleased with the proposed new daytime Mon-Sat pattern of service from Rose Hill.
2. The extension of the Mon-Fri off-peak service pattern to cover the whole day is welcomed. The main beneficiaries will be commuters and the spread of train times in the morning and evening peaks will give a much better balance than at present.
3. FoRHS is disappointed that the present clock face pattern of departures has not been maintained. Departures from Rose Hill will vary from xx13 to xx20 and xx44 to xx45. We would like to see consistent clock face departure times in the May 2018 timetable.
4. FoRHS welcomes the new earlier 0614 departure from Rose Hill.
5. FoRHS notes the merging of the 0835 and 0853 departures into a single 0845 departure. As long as this is a 4-car train, then this seems a logical move, as does the running of this train via Hyde.
6. The additional outbound train in the pm peak is particularly welcome but the benefit is diluted by the fact that the lack of clock face timings means that there will still be gaps between pm peak departures of up to 36 mins. FoRHS would like to see the proposed 1634, 1734 and 1834 departures from Piccadilly changed to 1639, 1739 and 1839.
7. FoRHS is pleased to see three additional early evening trains from Piccadilly at 1909, 1939, 2009 (replacing the present 2035) and 2109. These will be an encouragement to later-working commuters to use Rose Hill and Hyde loop stations. It will not though give the Rose Hill/Hyde corridor an acceptable evening service.
8. FoRHS is very unhappy that Northern intends to continue to deny Rose Hill and the Hyde loop stations a late evening service. This corridor needs a full evening service in order to encourage more leisure travel by train into central Manchester. We ask that Northern adopt the following suggestion:  
Northern's proposed last train from Piccadilly (dep 2109) will arrive at Rose Hill at 2140. It will then go out of service. We ask that this unit be kept in service. It should depart Rose Hill at 2145 and run fast (either light or as a Rose Hill-Romiley-Piccadilly service via Bredbury route) to Piccadilly in 20 mins. It would arrive at Piccadilly at 2205. (between 2010 and 2012 an off-peak train every hour ran Piccadilly-Romiley-Rose Hill in 20 mins). It could then depart Piccadilly at 2209 and run via the Hyde loop to Rose Hill, with the

### Friends of Rose Hill Station (FoRHS)

normal stopping pattern and arrive at Rose Hill at 2240. It would then depart Rose Hill at 2245, again running fast to Piccadilly, arriving at 2305. It would then depart at 2309 and travel to Rose Hill, via the Hyde loop, arriving at Rose Hill at 2340.

Looking at the proposed May 2018 timetable it would appear that neither of the fast Rose Hill-Piccadilly trains will conflict with any New Mills or Glossop trains.

Evening departures from Piccadilly for the Rose Hill corridor would then be at 1909, 1939, 2009, 2109, 2209 and 2309, which FoRHS feel is a start towards a more comprehensive all-day service

The additional two hour's use of a single train ought to cost very little but would give the Rose Hill/Hyde loop corridor a full day service. FoRHS predicts that this will generate considerable additional footfall at all stations on the corridor.

9. FoRHS is very unhappy that Northern wishes to continue to deny Rose Hill and the Hyde loop stations a Sunday service. This will deny retail workers, shoppers, those wishing to access Manchester's vibrant Sunday leisure sector and those wishing to connect with long distance trains, any chance of using their local trains.  
It also denies those in central Manchester the chance to get out to all the leisure opportunities (mostly walking, cycling and eating/drinking) that exist along this corridor. Rose Hill, for example, is at the centre of a network of footpaths and cycle routes. The introduction of 2tph, off-peak in 2012 led to a sharp growth (+60% in four years) in off-peak travel, showing that there is a latent demand. This high rate of growth has now slowed, which shows how Northern's policies towards this corridor are stifling further increases in patronage.
10. FoRHS would like to see an end to skip-stopping on this corridor. There have been substantial new housing developments close to both Hyde North and Fairfield stations but their hourly services make these stations unattractive for either commuters or off-peak travellers. Both of these stations should have the half-hourly service as the rest of the line.
11. At present no Rose Hill/Hyde loop stations stop at Ashburys. FoRHS sees no reason for this to be changed, preferring stops at Hyde North and Fairfield (see 10 above) to stops at Ashburys. The new timetable will give good connections at Guide Bridge, in both directions, should any Rose Hill corridor passengers wish to travel to/from Ashburys.
12. Until Dec 2012 Gorton was served by Glossop trains. In that year the Gorton stops were transferred to Rose Hill trains. There are traditional family links between Gorton and Hattersley on the Glossop line. The fact that there has been virtually no growth at Gorton, 2009 to 2015, whereas the rest of the Rose Hill corridor has grown by over 60%, shows that the switch from Glossop trains to Rose Hill trains has been unpopular. FoRHS would like to see the Gorton stops returned to the Glossop trains.
13. Although not directly timetable related, FoRHS would like to see the use of off-peak tickets allowed in the evening peak at least in the INBOUND direction. Almost every other part of the country permits the use of off-peak tickets against the main passenger

## **Appendix 4**

### **Friends of Rose Hill Station (FoRHS)**

flow in the evening peak and south of the Thames, the country's busiest commuter area, their use is permitted in both directions.

#### **Manchester Piccadilly to Glossop/Hadfield**

It is welcomed that the half hourly evening train service on this line is being extended to the 22:29 service from Manchester Piccadilly and the final train from Glossop, except on Sundays, in the May 2018 timetable.

There are family links between the residents of Hattersley and Gorton and it would encourage greater use of the rail service if the Glossop line services were to stop at Gorton station rather than the Hyde Loop services, as these families would be able to use a direct rail service.

#### **Hyde Loop Services**

The comments upon the proposed May 2018 Northern timetable for the services on the Hyde Loop/Rose Hill Marple made by Craig Wright on behalf of the FoRHS are largely shared by Tameside.

It is welcomed that the last train on this service from Manchester will be later at 21:09 rather than at 20:35 as at present but, this still leaves the stations on the Hyde Loop with no evening services. With the increase in the night time economy it is disappointing that the opportunity has not been taken to introduce evening services on this line, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.

The current two hour gap in the evening services from Manchester Piccadilly at Fairfield station between 18:44 and the last service at the station at 20:44 has been filled with a service at 19:48 but, this has been at the expense of the 20:44 service with the last train from Piccadilly now being an hour earlier at 19:48. This is an hour and a half before the final train from Piccadilly passes through without stopping at about 21:16. Northern should make every attempt to try and resolve this issue as the station is located near to recent major housing developments. Perhaps evening services at Fairfield could be provided by the Glossop line services.

## **Appendix 5 Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council**

The continuation of the half hourly service on the line from Manchester until 20:09 rather than until 18:35 as at present is welcomed.

We are very disappointed that Northern has not taken the opportunity to introduce a Sunday service on this line. It is now one of the few lines in Greater Manchester which still does not have a Sunday service and with the development of the seven day economy, with Sunday shopping, increasing leisure opportunities and people wishing to make longer distance rail journey's, this appears to us to be a major omission from the proposed timetable. This impacts upon Tameside residents who live near the line, who work in the city centre and who are dependent on public transport to reach their employment within the city centre who are not able to use rail services, with their faster journey times, on Sundays.

The continuation of skip stopping on these services in the proposed May 2018 timetable at Hyde North and Fairfield stations does not encourage the growth in patronage at these two stations. Large scale residential developments in the vicinity of these stations have and are continuing to be constructed and the introduction of a half hourly service will encourage greater growth in patronage at these two stations.

**Simon Eastwood**

**Senior Engineer**

Strategic Infrastructure

Development and Investment

Place