



The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport

18 December 2025

Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit (TIPU)
Department of Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Dear TIPU,

Letter of support – Network Rail Stalybridge to Diggle (Saddleworth) Enhancements Order

On behalf of the Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport UK (CILT(UK)), I wish to express our support for the Network Rail Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) for the Trans Pennine Route Upgrade (TRU) between Stalybridge and Diggle (Saddleworth).

CILT(UK) is a professional institution embracing all transport modes whose members are engaged in the provision of transport services for both passengers and freight, the management of logistics and the supply chain, transport planning, government and administration. Our principal concern is that transport policies and procedures should be effective and efficient, based on objective analysis of the issues and practical experience, and that good practice should be widely disseminated and adopted

CILT is actively involved in the development of TRU and has been a member of the DfT/NR TRU Freight Challenge Group since its inception.

TRU is a transformational, urgently-needed investment in one of the North's most strategically important rail corridors. It will deliver the modern infrastructure needed to improve reliability, support growth in rail freight - consistent with Government's 75% rail freight growth target - and strengthen the region's economic competitiveness.

The enhancements - notably gauge clearance to W12, electrification and additional capacity - are essential to achieving modal shift from road to rail and support the UK's wider decarbonisation goals. The works between Stalybridge and Diggle address long-standing constraints that have limited both freight and passenger operations for decades.

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK

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The M62 east-west corridor is one of the busiest freight arteries in the country. It typically supports the movement of 17,000 HGVs during a typical 12 hour weekday and a further 6,000 HGVs during the 12 hour night (7pm-7am shift). The heavy nature of the freight on the M62 is shown by the fact that around 70% of the HGVs are articulated vehicles moving material over the Pennines. Some of this is definitely an addressable market for rail freight both in containerised and bulk form once the route is upgraded. Research by the logistics Institute of Hull has shown there is latent rail freight currently moving by road as there is no viable route at the moment.

The inability to move standard shipping containers across the Pennines by rail is a substantial inhibitor of modal switch from HGVs to rail and relieving congestion on the M62 and M60, which would be to the considerable benefit of the Northern economy and environment. Trans Pennine is the only major trunk route in the country which cannot take standard shipping containers and around 1000 HGV movements a day are likely to switch from these congested road arteries to rail, improving supply chain reliability and sustainability for Northern businesses.

The TRU upgrade has been a very long time in development and it is critical that gauge enhancement and capacity for freight is now provided as quickly as possible.

Accordingly, we strongly welcome the Order and in particular:

- W12 gauge clearance, grade separation and improved layouts at key junctions, which will remove operational bottlenecks and support more efficient operation
- resolving freight capacity constraints between Stalybridge and Diggle (Saddleworth)
- improved connectivity for customers and communities, as well accessibility improvements for passengers at stations
- full electrification and increased line speeds, enabling growth in existing and emerging markets.

CILT therefore recommends approval of this TWAO at the earliest opportunity. We recognise the need for alignment with future infrastructure investment programmes, especially Northern Powerhouse Rail, and coordinated delivery will maximise long-term benefits and deliver efficient freight paths from coast to coast across the region.

Please feel free to contact me should you wish to discuss this letter or our policy recommendations in greater detail.

Your faithfully

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