

New Tramway Extension

North Pier to North Station

Blackpool Council





Brief History

The Blackpool Tramway is synonymous with the town and the only original tramway in Britain to remain in continuous operation. Now over 130 years old, the first section was opened in 1885 between Cocker Street, near Talbot Square, and Dean Street near South Pier.



The present 18km route between Starr Gate and Fleetwood was established by linking the Blackpool Corporation Tramway to the Fleetwood line in 1900 and the further extension to Starr Gate in 1926.

The Blackpool Improvement Act 1899 granted Blackpool Corporation Tramway the powers to operate a tramway along the current proposed extension route from North Pier to the North Railway Station and then beyond to Layton which opened on 18 June 1902.



Blackpool Improvement Act 1901 granted powers for the single track route up Talbot Road to become a double line and the map shows the double track granted.

The Layton tramway route ceased passenger operation at the end of the summer season on 19 October 1936.

Introduction

Following on from the recent successful upgrade of the Blackpool to Fleetwood tramway, Blackpool Council is now proposing to extend the existing tramway from North Pier to Blackpool North railway station. The proposals will re-establish the link to North Station, which ceased operation in 1936 and will provide direct services from North Station to the north and south of the town.





Benefits of the Proposed Scheme

The proposed extension to North Station will:

- Improve public transport in the Blackpool area
- Provide connectivity and integration between the existing tramway and the national rail services at North Station
- Provide benefits to commuters and visitors travelling to and from the town
- Support regeneration and economic growth by improving accessibility to jobs and services and improving the connectivity between the economically important seafront and the redeveloping town centre
- Complement and support the continued development and regeneration of the Talbot Gateway area
- Facilitate urban realm enhancements in the town centre and provide improvements to the Talbot Road area
- Provide on street parking and servicing along Talbot Road



Proposed Route



Talbot Square

The proposed tramway extension will leave the existing route at North Pier, via a two way double track junction. The route would cross the Promenade highway and enter Talbot Square, which would be remodelled to provide segregation of trams and highway traffic. The existing pedestrian signals on the Promenade would be replaced by a signalled intersection. A new eastbound tramstop would be located in Talbot Square, to allow interchanges with the existing North Pier tramstops.

Talbot Road

Beyond Talbot Square, a double track alignment continues eastwards in the centre of the highway. Along this section of the route eastbound highway traffic will be diverted along Clifton Street. The signalled intersection with Abingdon Street will remain and the highway movements will not change.

The proposed route continues along Talbot Road to a new signalled intersection with Topping Street. This section of the route will be shared with highway traffic and on street parking, loading and taxi bays will be provided.

Tramway Terminus (Wilko)

The proposed tramway terminus is planned to form part of the redevelopment of the current Wilko store site. The terminus is planned to be located in the centre of the development, close to and at the same level as the existing underpass to Blackpool North Station.



Proposed Services

The existing tramway service operates between Starr Gate and Fleetwood Ferry from approximately 05.30am until 11.30pm, with a peak service every 10 minutes. Following completion of the extension to North Station, these services and timescales will be maintained.

The proposed services to North Station will operate to a similar timescale with a peak service every 10 minutes. The services to and from North Station will alternate with northbound services towards Bispham and southbound services towards Pleasure Beach.

The additional services to and from North Station will also provide additional capacity and an increased frequency of service in the busy seafront area of the tramway network.



Timescales

It is proposed to make an application for an order under the Transport and Works Act 1992 for powers to construct, operate and maintain the extension in summer 2016. A decision authorising the scheme would then be expected from the Secretary of State within around 12 months.

The proposed scheme is also subject to final funding approval by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership. It is anticipated that final funding approval would be sought at the end of 2017.

It is hoped that construction would commence at the beginning of 2018. It is anticipated that the proposed tramway extension will take up to sixteen months to construct, with services to North Station commencing by April 2019.

The work would be sequenced to minimise disruption and would ensure that access was maintained to businesses and properties along the route during the period of the works.

Further consultation

As the scheme develops, further and more detailed information will be made available. This will include a forthcoming exhibition outlining the proposals and updates on progress to be held in Blackpool's Central Library early in June 2016. We would like to hear the views of local business owners, residents, community groups and anyone who visits Blackpool for work or leisure.

There will also be an opportunity for formal representations to be made to the Secretary of State once the application for the Transport and Works Act Order is submitted.

Please let us know your thoughts. You can contact us via:

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