

**BIRMINGHAM PLAN 2031****Statement by CPRE Warwickshire****MATTER I – Transport and Digital Communications – Policies TP37-45**

*Matters covered: TP40 Camp Hill Chords; additional rapid transit routes; Five Ways station*

**(5) Is the support given by policy TP40 to the Camp Hill chords justified?**

The Camp Hill chords are not sound and should not be provided for. They would be expensive and divert trains to the wrong stations. A 'Grand Central' station at Curzon Street would be a much better solution and would integrate the rail network well. (See Matter G Statement.) The Camp Hill chords would be of much less value.

The Camp Hill line should be used not for local rail services but for high-speed rail services to Bristol and South West England - which it is currently used for to some extent. This is a more valuable use than a local service. A tram route along the A435 Moseley Road would be a better way of enhancing public transport in that corridor. The main Cross-City line via University can then be increased to a more frequent and reliable local service (up to every 5 min).

A new station at Soho Road is supported.

**Should additional rapid transit routes, and the need for improvements to Five Ways station, be referred to in Policy TP40?**

'Rapid transit routes' unless they are tramways are simply buses with greater priority at junctions than other traffic. They are seen by users as ordinary bus services, but more efficient. 'Rapid transit' sounds impressive in a Plan but does not amount to anything more than better bus priority measures in practice. These are developed by Centro and the bus operator as finance and practicality allows. Including them in a Plan will not add anything.

Five Ways also has significance as a central area station (see Matter G statement). As stated there, a much safer and more attractive new access to Five Ways station is needed pedestrians from the north side of the Middle Ring Road. At present Five Ways, while well-located in theory, is difficult to access from the southern part of the central area. Its entrance is on the noisy and wide Middle Ring Road, and there is no direct route to it from the part of the central area to the north of the MRR.

Five Ways should also have better access from the south (the residential Edgbaston area). Access to the southern end of both platforms could be arranged from the overbridge to the south of the station. At present the large residential area of Calthorpe Fields and the part of Edgbaston east of the canal do not have good and convenient access to Five Ways although it is their most valuable public transport facility. The Plan should specify this if it is to be found sound.