

TRANSPORT

Briefing

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Rotherham-Sheffield tram train pilot still on

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Vossloh: will supply tram trains for Sheffield to Rotherham route

The UK's first tram train project remains live with transport minister Norman Baker in South Yorkshire this week and purportedly signing contracts to deliver the scheme.

Tram trains are due to operate between Sheffield and Rotherham using the Supertram system and a new junction that will allow vehicles to transfer on to the national rail network.

The scheme was announced in 2009 (TB 6213) with Norman Baker reapproving the project in 2012 (TB 8497) when a 2015 launch date was quoted. The service is now expected to launch in early 2016.



South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive awarded Vossloh a contract to build three tram trains in July 2012 (TB 8639). These will be the first vehicles in the UK to run on both heavy rail and tram networks. The tram trains will be dual voltage to future proof them for any subsequent electrification of the Midland Main Line and ensure the vehicles can operate at both light and heavy rail operating voltages.

A further four conventional trams have been ordered from Vossloh to supplement the existing Supertram fleet of 25 3-car vehicles built by Siemens.

The new service will link Rotherham Parkgate and Sheffield city centre. Network Rail will build a new junction and points between the light rail and heavy rail lines near Meadowhall South. The line from Meadowhall South to Rotherham Central station and Rotherham Parkgate will be electrified.

New platforms will be built at Meadowhall South and at Rotherham Parkgate and Rotherham Central station's platforms will be extended to facilitate the new service. Options for future stations will be considered.

The first two years of operation will be used to pilot the tram train concept so that the railway industry can understand and assess the technical issues involved. If the trial proves successful tram trains could be introduced elsewhere in the UK.

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